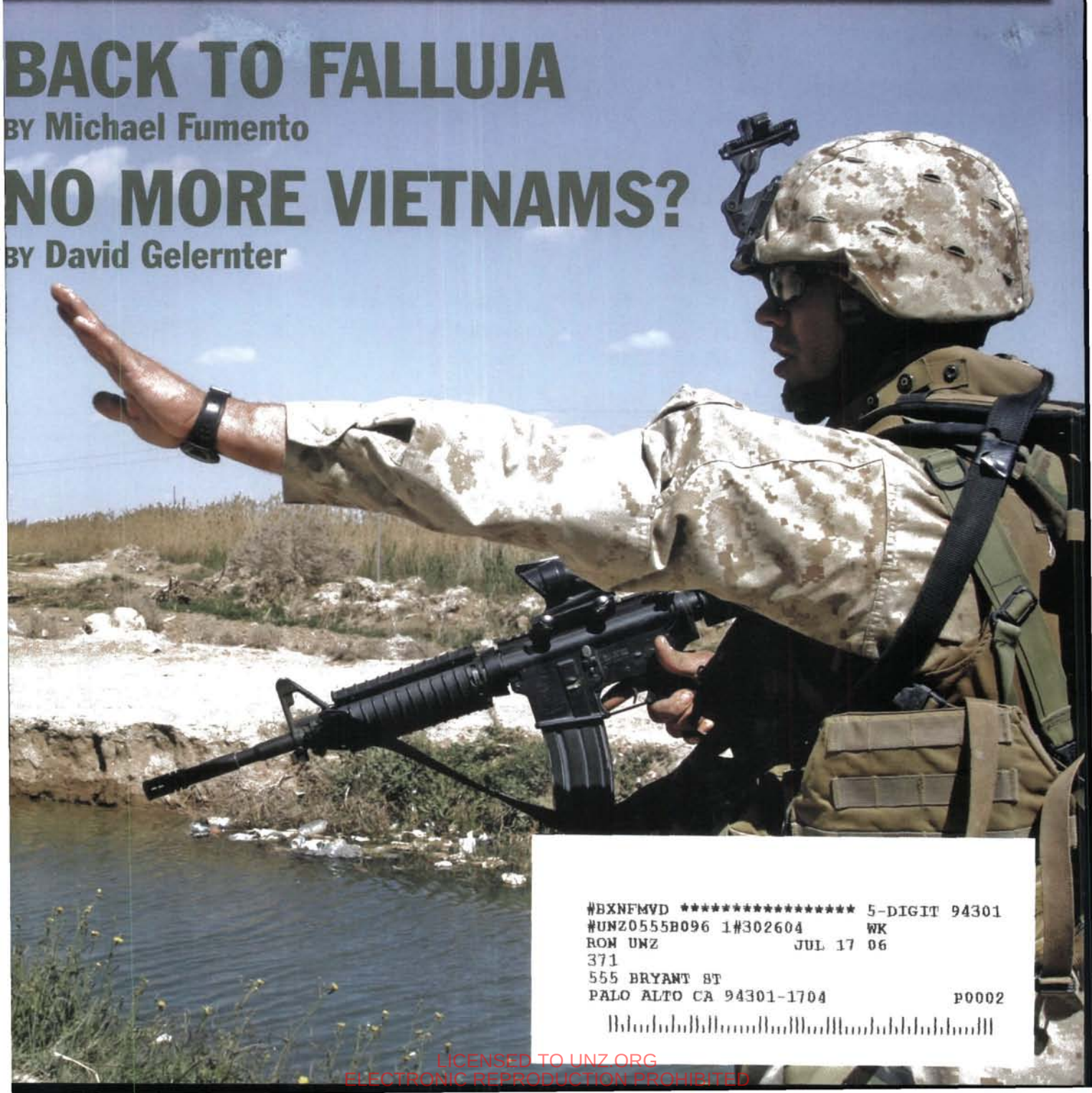
the weekly
Standard

MAY 8, 2006 $3.95

LET THE GENERALS SPEAK
FREDERICK W. KAGAN

BACK TO FALLUJA
BY Michael Fumento

NO MORE VIETNAMS?
BY David Gelernter



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the weekly Standard

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Newsweek Copies *Slate*

THE SCRAPBOOK knows more than a few former lacrosse players, including a couple here on staff. So when we read Dave Jamieson's "brief sociological account" of the sport, published on April 7 in *Slate*, we found ourselves nodding (and laughing) in agreement.

"They can be spotted driving SUVs with 'LAX' stickers affixed to the rear windows," Jamieson wrote of lacrosse players. "Many grow addicted to dipping Skoal and wearing soiled white caps with college logos on them."

Newsweek's Susannah Meadows and Evan Thomas must have enjoyed Jamieson's piece, too. Or maybe one of the five reporters and researchers who contributed to their May 1 cover story on the Duke scandal did. For when Meadows and Thomas tried their hand at a bit of sporting sociology, here's what they came up with in their depiction of lacrosse players:

"They can often be seen driving in SUVs with LAX decals, their dirty-white college ball caps turned around, a pinch of Skoal in their mouths."

THE SCRAPBOOK thinks Mr. Jamieson's version, besides being first, was better written. Small wonder someone at *Newsweek* chose to borrow it. Pity they didn't give Jamieson credit. ♦

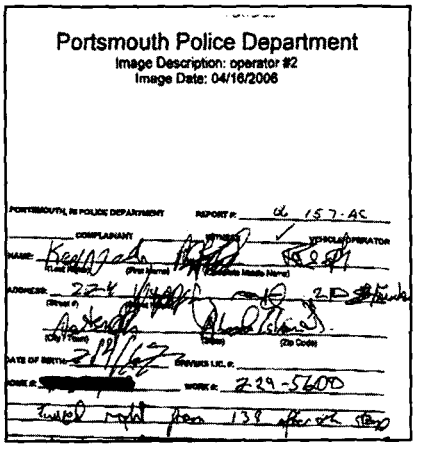
Patrick, We Know Ye All Too Well

Everyone has an off day now and then. But Rhode Island congressman Patrick Kennedy has had an off 20 years, going back to his cocaine-addiction rehab stint in 1986. The Overshadowed Kennedy—son of Ted, nephew of Uncle Jack, cousin of Maria—never fails to unimpress, if that's a word (and if it's not, it's one the malaprop king has probably used himself; Kennedy, for instance, once lamented middle-class Americans' inability to "make mends meet").

Who—besides the Rhode Island electorate that mysteriously returns him to office—could forget Patrick trashing his chartered yacht, or announcing that "I am on a lot of different medications, for among other things, depression," or shoving a female airport security guard when she tried to make him check his bag.

Fresh off of a career high-point earlier this month, in which Patrick was hit in the mouth with a hammer while watching a demonstration of Impact Gel shock-absorbing material at a trade show (he got six stitches and didn't even cry!), Kennedy has again handed his *bête noire* Howie Carr, a *Boston Herald* columnist and radio host, fresh material.

On April 15, Patrick's car was T-boned as he hurriedly pulled across an oncoming lane into a CVS pharmacy in Portsmouth, R.I. Carr was particularly taken with Patrick's handwritten account in the Portsmouth Police Department report. Not for what the mostly illegible one-sentence explanation said, but because of how it was written (see below).


Portsmouth Police Department
Image Description: operator #2
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While the officer on the scene reported Kennedy "appeared normal," such as it is, Patrick's handwriting looks like it was scrawled on a cocktail napkin at an open bar in a Gravitron. Or as Carr delicately put it, "It looks like it was written by a chimpanzee, or a 2-year-old. Or a Kennedy."

At least, writes Carr, it was only a fender-bender by Kennedy standards. "Not only did a single blonde not die, no one was even paralyzed or raped." ♦

Fake Tocqueville Lives!

Ours is "the greatest country the world has ever seen," writes Lawrence B. Wilkerson on the op-ed page of the April 23 *Baltimore Sun*. And Wilkerson ought to know. Just look at his career: first, a 31-year active-duty stint in the Army; next, day-to-day management of the State Department as Colin Powell's chief of staff; and, currently, an extended post-retirement tour of the nation's television studios, during which Wilkerson has "estranged" himself from Powell but made many new friends among the outpatient crowd over at *Daily Kos*—by bitterly denouncing the very same Bush administration policies he previously helped implement.

No question about it: Only in America could Mrs. Wilkerson's little boy Lawrence B. rise to such political celebrity despite never really having learned to read and write.

Which is the unavoidable impression left by Wilkerson's *Sun* essay. So far as we can tell, the piece is supposed to be about how, when George W. Bush became president, the United States began to "cease

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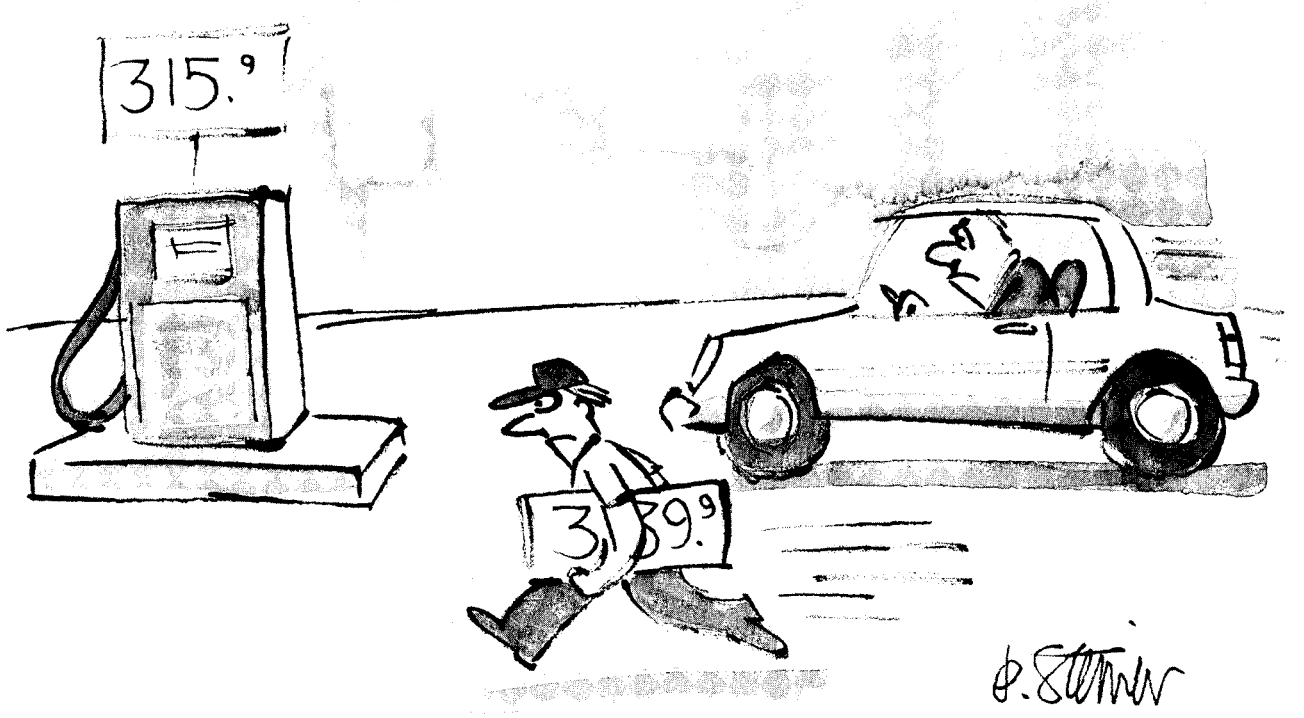

being good" and descend into "neo-Jacobin" radicalism. But we can't be entirely sure about that because (a) the analogy is under-developed and hopelessly confused (Wilkerson appears to believe that Robespierre and Napoleon were both Jacobins), and (b) much of the piece is written in a weird pidgin subdialect that THE SCRAPBOOK's never seen before. For instance: "Unprecedented interpretations of the Constitution that holds the president as commander-in-chief to be all-powerful and without checks and balances marks the hubris and unparalleled radicalism of this administration."

Excuse me, Meester, where is I would enjoy to use thank you the bathroom?

Then there's this. "As Alexis de Tocqueville once said"—according to Col. Wilkerson and a thousand other hack pseudo-intellectuals before him—" 'America is great because she is good. If America ever ceases to be good, America will cease to be great.'"

Of course, as Claremont McKenna College government professor John J. Pitney Jr. has tirelessly pointed out, here in our pages and elsewhere, this purported Tocqueville quotation is entirely bogus. But at least it's in standard English. ♦

More Arguments for Homeschooling

We missed the annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association in San Francisco earlier this month, alas. We would like to have seen 14,000 education researchers jabbering together. Happily, education researchers Frederick Hess and Laura LoGerfo, on their joint blog HessLo, recorded some of the cultural and intellectual treasures we missed. These they helpfully divided into "the five major fields of educational inquiry: imperialism; ghetto culture; hegemonic oppression and right-thinking multiculturalism; cyber jargon; and the utterly incomprehensible."

Among the sessions: "Written on, Written Over, but Refusing to be Written Off: Indigenous Educators Teaching in the Empire," "Ho No Mo': A Qualitative Investigation of Adolescent Female Language Reclamation and Rejection," "The Formation of the Subjectivity of Mail-Order Brides in Taiwan and Their Educational Strategies Toward Their Children," "Resisting Resistance: Using Eco-Justice and Eco-Racism to Awaken Mindfulness, Compassion, and Wisdom in Preservice Teachers," "Discovering Collage as a Method in Researching Multicultural Lives," and "Queering Schooling and (Un)Doing the Public Good: Rubbing Against the Grain for Schooling Sexualities." There are many more where those come from—see *hesslo.blogspot.com*.

The AERA calls itself "the most prominent international professional organization with the primary goal of advancing educational research and its practical application." We'll take their word for it. ♦

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Casual

Hasta la Vista, Siesta

Ever since the Socialists came back to power, the Spanish government has been monkeying around with some venerable traditions—not only the institution of marriage but also the definition of "person." Last month, Prime Minister José Luis Rodríguez Zapatero's Socialist Workers' party introduced a bill that would create "simian rights."

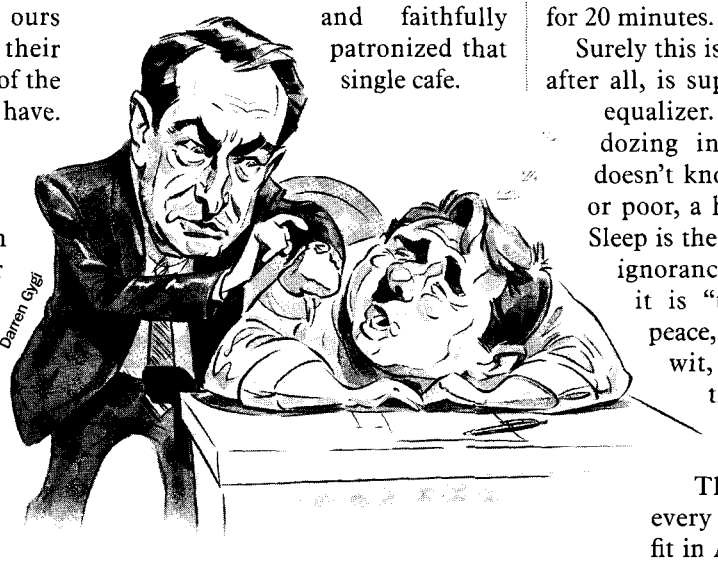
It seems that the apes have a genetic makeup so similar to ours that, at least in the eyes of their champions, they deserve some of the same legal protections humans have. The hidebound would probably tell these simian sympathizers to go take a siesta, but now even that noble concession to midday lethargy is under siege.

Zapatero's government actually mandated in January that government employees—accustomed to a three-hour lunch and nap break—be restricted to 45 minutes to grab a bite. Opponents of the midday extended break expect the private sector to follow suit. This is radical.

As a convert to the siesta, I feel the loss acutely. There was a time when, like many outsiders, I regarded the prolonged afternoon break as an expression of Latin sloth. Didn't it lead the Spaniards to serve dinner at a preposterous 9 or 10 at night? The typical siesta might be a simple 20-minute nap, but some notorious loafers have abused the privilege. Don Quixote's sidekick Sancho Panza was accustomed to "four or five hours a day" of napping in the summer's heat. Clearly not a recipe for success.

Then a few years ago I had a sojourn in Spain.

I remember the precise time and place of my conversion. I stopped for lunch at a sparsely populated, family-run café in Gerona, a medieval town in the exurbs of Barcelona. The deal was sweet: seven euros for a four course meal with paella—and a full bottle of wine. Naturally, I feasted, and then I retired to my hostel and experienced the perfect satisfaction of the siesta. I extended my stay in Gerona three days and faithfully patronized that single cafe.



That's when I started to appreciate all the beauties of this civilized custom. Children went home from school for lunch, and so did their fathers. Families escaped the heat of midday for a leisurely meal together and a time of repose.

Now, the world is a harsher place. Thanks to the Socialists, father and mother have disappeared from Spanish birth certificates, in favor of "Progenitor A" and "Progenitor B." And when it comes to work schedules, economics rules. The statisticians find that the three-hour lunch doesn't maximize productivity. Spain desires to prosper, so the siesta is fading.

In the larger cities, the practice has been falling out of favor for some time. Longer commutes and commerce with nations on a 9-5 schedule make it increasingly difficult for city-dwellers to make it home to the suburbs for lunch.

And the left is leading the charge. I find this confusing. Strip the workers of the world of their siesta? Since when do union types campaign for fewer and shorter breaks? As it turns out, the higher-ups in the government's employ still take their siestas, while depriving the average José of his nap. In Barcelona, while underlings labor, stressed-out execs frequent "siesta shops," where a few euros will buy them a massage to lull them to sleep and the use of a bed for 20 minutes.

Surely this is not equitable. Sleep, after all, is supposed to be a great equalizer. When a Spaniard is dozing in the afternoon, he doesn't know whether he's rich or poor, a human or a monkey. Sleep is the true Rawlsian veil of ignorance; as the poet wrote, it is "the certain knot of peace, / the baiting-place of wit, the balm of woe, / the poor man's wealth, the prisoner's release."

The siesta is not for every culture—it wouldn't fit in America (though *U.S. News*, where I once interned, had a siesta room marked with a sign that said "Snooze You Can Use"). And one probably shouldn't look upon other countries as cultural museums, where nothing can change so that we tourists can experience their curiosities.

But when the country that has long fostered an appreciation of family, food, and the good life abandons naptime, then the lethargic the world over lose their model and guide. All old certainties are in question. In the new day, even the monkeys, I suppose, will be forced to get down to work.

Joseph Lindsley

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Mulling over Mullahs

Taken together, William Kristol's, Thomas McInerney's, and Reuel Marc Gerecht's approaches to "the Iran question" are logically unassailable ("Unacceptable?" "Target: Iran," and "To Bomb, or Not to Bomb," respectively, April 24). There is much talk about whether "we" are right to put the "military option" on the table, but the truth is the responsibility lies with the Iranian mullahs. It is they who have introduced the "destroy Israel" and the "uranium enrichment" options. Only the mullahs can take those options away, but at this point they seem hellbent on their drive to war and destruction. Unacceptable? Precisely! And supporters of the war on terrorism should eagerly engage, rather than avoid, this urgent debate.

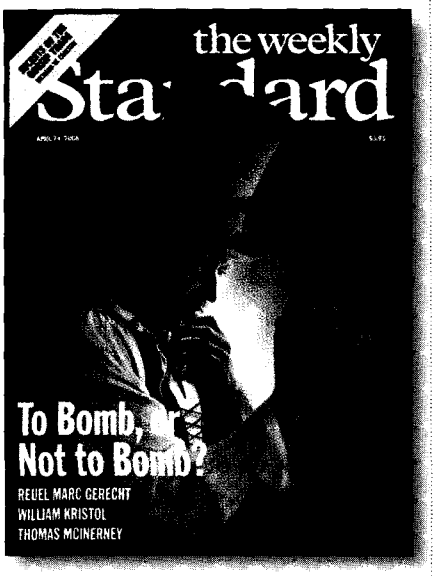
Steve Beren
Seattle, Wash.

Talking Turkey

Contrary to what Ellen Bork suggests ("The Price of Denial," April 17), there is a healthy and robust debate within Turkey on the Ottoman Armenian tragedy. In contrast, here in the United States, Armenian activists have been largely successful in preventing any real debate on this historic controversy. The recent cancellations of an academic forum on Turkish-Armenian relations at the University of Southern California and of the airing of a PBS panel discussion program on this very question are low points for those who seek a fair and honest accounting of this sad chapter of history. It is hypocritical to criticize Turkey when the debate here is less open and more exposed to political pressure.

Genocide is arguably the most odious of crimes, but in a democracy the accused reserves the right to present a defense. In this case the verdict has been handed down without due process, while pleas for a fair trial fall on deaf ears. Although a legal case has never been made, the history of the matter is also by no means settled. *The Armenian Massacres in Ottoman Turkey: A Disputed Genocide*, a recent book by eminent scholar Guenter Lewy, concludes that the history of this matter is incomplete and overly politicized.

Only through dialogue can Turks and Armenians reach a mutual understanding about their common history. Stifling



debate and perpetuating a unilaterally established orthodoxy may be expedient, but it will not bring about closure. Turkish prime minister Erdogan last year proposed the establishment of a joint historical commission with Armenia on this matter. If the goal is really to bring about reconciliation, we should support this historic initiative.

Nabi Sensoy
Ambassador of Turkey to the United States
Washington, D.C.

Ellen Bork responds: Ambassador Sensoy may be just doing his job as a representative of Turkey when he asserts that compared with the United States his country has a healthy and robust debate about the Armenian genocide. Provisions of the new Turkish penal code prohibiting insults against the state and "Turkishness" and attempts to influence court proceedings have been used against authors, journalists, and publishers who mention the deaths of over one million Armenians under the Ottoman empire. It is difficult to see how any initiative of the Turkish government to deal with its history, including the one Ambassador Sensoy promotes, could be sincere so long as the law prohibits truthful discussion.

Suckers

Edward Short is confused on two counts in "Owzat, you say?" (April 24). First, when the Brits turn their clocks one hour ahead each spring, the result is "British Summer Time." When Yanks do likewise, the result is "Daylight Saving Time." This has nothing to do with Gershwin's reference to "summertime." Second, growing up in my neck of the woods (Pittsburgh), anyone referring to candy on a stick as a "lollipop" rather than a "sucker" would have received a severe ear bashing.

Mike Vita
Alexandria, Va.

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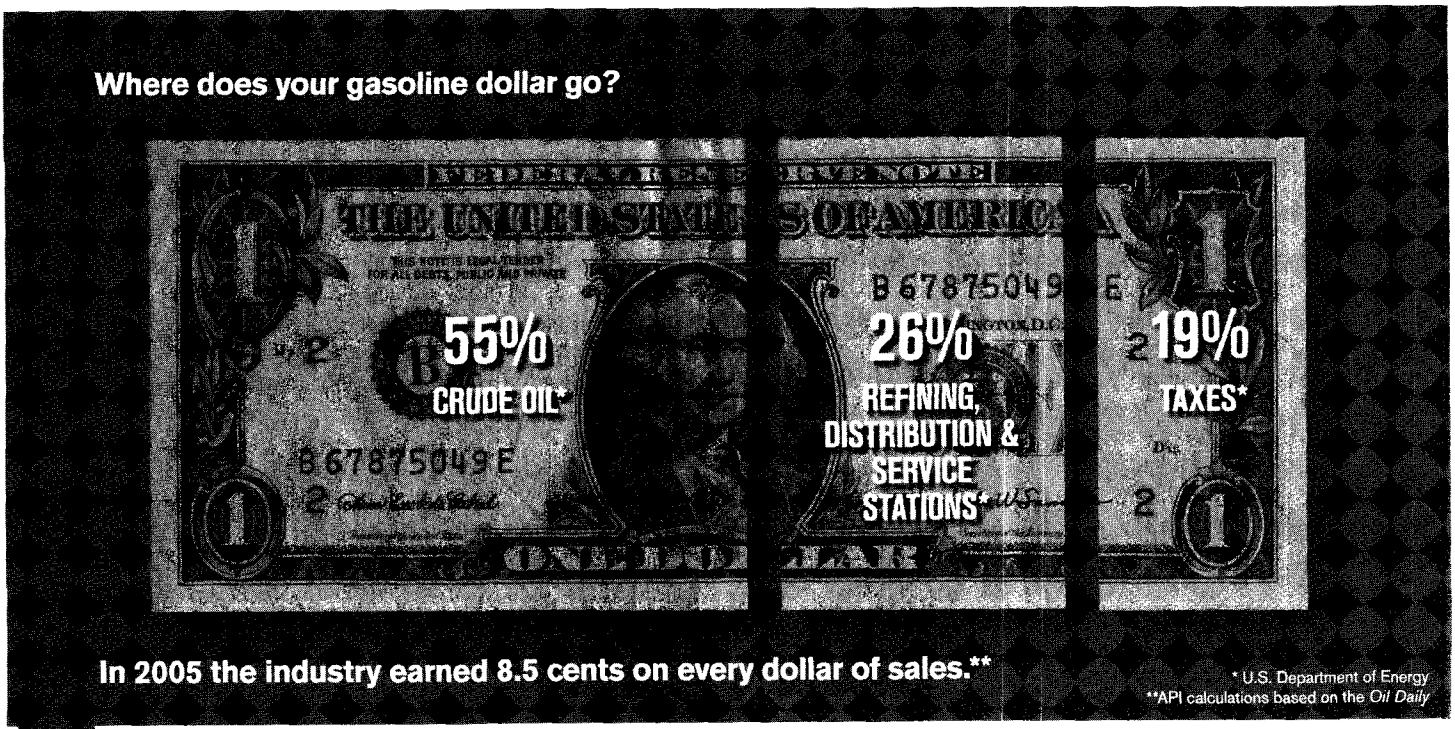

Many Americans are concerned about the cost of fuel at the pump, and they naturally ask, "what accounts for the price I pay?"

While there are several components in the retail price of fuel, a single element is by far the most important: crude oil prices. According to a June 2005 report by the Federal Trade Commission, "the world price of crude oil is the most important factor in the price of gasoline."

Rising global demand and political tensions have driven the price of crude oil up, and it now accounts for more than half the price of a gallon of gas.

What else figures in the price at the pump? The cost to refine, distribute and market at local service stations – as well as taxes. The seasonal change to summertime fuel is more challenging this spring due to ethanol-blended gasoline being introduced for the first time in several major markets.

As in any marketplace, fuel prices will fluctuate with supply and demand – and today demand is chasing an increasingly tight supply.

The price at the pump

In fact, the U.S. Department of Energy now forecasts higher prices this summer than last because of a tight world crude oil market and the introduction of new U.S. fuel specifications.

To learn more about fuel prices, what the oil and natural gas industry is doing and what you can do, visit www.api.org.

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"Iran Is Not Iraq"

"We are committed to a diplomatic course [to stop Iran's nuclear program] that should, with enough unity and with enough strength and with enough common purpose, make it possible to convince the Iranian government [to change its course]. . . .

"Let me go right to the crux of the question. The United States of America understands and believes that Iran is not Iraq. The Iraq circumstances had a special character going back for 12 years of suspended hostilities after a war of aggression which Saddam Hussein himself launched. . . .

"It goes without saying that the United States believes and others believe that, in order to be credible, the U.N. Security Council, of course, has to act. . . . The Security Council is the primary and most important institution for the maintenance of peace and stability and security, and it cannot have its word and its will simply ignored by a member state."

—Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice in Europe last week, from Glenn Kessler's April 28 account in the Washington Post, *"U.S. Tries to Calm Fears in Europe on Using Bases"*

Say it ain't so, Condi!

In fact, Condi and her colleagues will try to say—privately and off the record—that it ain't so. They'll explain to Bush supporters here in Washington that the administration hasn't really gone soft on Iran. The State Department is just doing its job, reassuring the Europeans so as to keep them on board. Sure, hawks will worry that proclaiming "Iran is not Iraq" signals that the Bush administration is now terrified even to threaten the use of force against terror-sponsoring dictatorships seeking weapons of mass destruction. But all options, at least theoretically, are still on the table. And Ahmadinejad is doing such a good job scaring the Europeans. This is no time for Washington to be scary!

No, it's time to be reassuring. That doesn't mean we don't do some finger-wagging when Ahmadinejad taunts and challenges us, saying one day he's going to destroy Israel, the next that he's going to transfer nuclear technology to Sudan, and meanwhile buying more long-range missiles from North Korea. But it would be simple-minded to rise to his bait, and to think that we really have to do something tough in response to him.

After all, he's just hurting himself! At some point the Iranian government will figure out that aggressiveness and bellicosity don't really produce victories. They'll come to understand that the momentum Tehran seems to have built up in the last several months is misleading. If it looks as though Iran is suddenly being treated with more fear and more respect throughout the Middle East, and beyond—that's just temporary. Deep down, the Iranians know, as the State Department knows, that what really matters is that they're running a risk of getting pretty darn isolated from the international community. And meanwhile, we're arm in arm with the Europeans again.

As for the statement, "The Security Council is the primary and most important institution for the maintenance of peace and stability and security"—of course that's not true. But what's the harm in saying it? It creates goodwill as the United States goes through the Security Council process. Sure, that process won't lead anywhere. But then the Europeans will finally see that they've got to join us in serious sanctions. They will be very targeted sanctions, which won't affect ordinary Iranians, because that would be counterproductive. But a signal of resolve will have been sent to Tehran, nonetheless. They will know that if they don't change, we and the Europeans will remain united behind these targeted sanctions. And you can't argue with this: Our relations with the Europeans are much better than they were during that nightmarish first term.

***

Yes, that's the view from Foggy Bottom. And it's true the Europeans don't fear the Bush administration any more. Nor, unfortunately, do others. One might also note that, despite all the goodwill built up by our outreach to the capitals of Europe, President Bush seems much weaker today than he was in the bad old days of unilateralism and bellicosity, and so does the United States. But the State Department is popular, and at least we don't look like Neanderthals in the drawing rooms of Europe and Georgetown.

Condi and her colleagues may come home and say, privately, it ain't so. But it is so. Much of the U.S. government no longer believes in, and is no longer acting to enforce, the Bush Doctrine. "The United States of America understands and believes that Iran is not Iraq." That's a diplomatic way of saying that the United States of America is in retreat.

—William Kristol

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Post-Katrina Politics

Things are looking up for Louisiana Republicans.

BY FRED BARNES

Baton Rouge

LOUISIANA GOVERNOR Kathleen Blanco rented a fleet of buses a few weeks ago to take state legislators on a tour of New Orleans neighborhoods ravaged by Hurricane Katrina. New Orleans is only an hour's drive away, but fewer than half of the 143 legislators showed up for the trip. Maybe the legislators were indifferent. But the snub was also an unmistakable sign of the loss of political dominance in Louisiana by New Orleans, one of the most overwhelmingly Democratic cities in the nation. At least it *once* was a powerful Democratic stronghold, the arbiter of Louisiana elections. But no more.

As best as anyone can tell, Katrina drove as many as 250,000 people out of the city, many permanently. And the best guess is the vast majority were blacks, mostly poor, who vote lopsidedly Democratic. So, for the foreseeable future, Democrats won't be able to amass the 100,000-vote margin they needed for statewide victory. "New Orleans has fewer voters, and the Democratic machine is gone," a Republican consultant says.

The upshot is that Louisiana is on the verge of a political realignment from Democratic control to Republican. Gov. Blanco, whose performance in the post-Katrina recovery has been scandalously lame, is deeply unpopular. She narrowly defeated Republican Bobby Jindal in 2003, partly thanks to voters turned off by Jindal's heritage—his parents emigrated from India to Baton Rouge before he was born—and dark skin color.

Jindal, elected to the U.S. House in 2004, is now the favorite to oust Blanco next year or, should she decline to run for reelection, to defeat any other Democrat. "People have grown more comfortable with Jindal," says John Maginnis, the premier Louisiana political analyst. "He's really been working the state." Race should not be a major factor in 2007.

Democrats are growing anxious. Bob Odom, the Democratic agricultural commissioner who has lost faith in Blanco, arranged for a poll in hopes it might encourage former Democratic senator John Breaux to run for governor. It didn't. Breaux remained uninterested. The poll pegged Jindal's support at 37 percent, Breaux's at 17, and Blanco's at 16.

Even more than the governorship, Republicans are intensely focused on the Louisiana legislature in 2007. They have a good chance of winning the Louisiana House for the first time since Reconstruction, thanks to another new political factor—term limits. Enacted in 1995, they restrict legislators to 12 years in office, which means that next year dozens of Democrats will be gone.

Republicans now hold 40 of the 105 House seats and are targeting 21 seats in conservative areas now held by term-limited Democrats. They need to pick up 13 seats to take over the House. Senator David Vitter won 15 of the state's targeted districts in 2004 (when he became the first Republican senator from Louisiana since the 19th century) and President Bush got more than 60 percent in the other six.

Louisiana is one of the few states where term limits were passed by the legislature, not by referendum. Legislators usually balk at setting a limit on how long they can stay in office. "It was the peak of term limit feeling," says Maginnis. "A lot of those who voted for term limits will now tell you it was the worst vote they ever cast." Too bad. Term limits stand.

Who was the author of the term limits bill in 1995? A young statehouse member named David Vitter. Today, he and Jindal are the most determined and vigorous politicians in Louisiana—and surely the smartest. Vitter, a Harvard grad, was a Rhodes Scholar and later sat on a regional panel that interviewed Jindal, then a Brown University student, for a Rhodes. Afterwards, Vitter, 45, says he told his wife that Jindal, 34, was so impressive that he felt "old and dumb" by comparison. Jindal won a Rhodes.

Vitter surprised many by winning the race for Breaux's vacated Senate seat without having to face a runoff. Louisiana's weird election system requires candidates of all parties to run in a single primary. Unless one gets 50 percent or more—this rarely happens—the top two go against each other in a runoff. Vitter got the 50 percent. "It really was a feat," says Ed Renwick, who heads the Institute of Politics at Loyola University New Orleans. "He was by far the best candidate."

So single-minded was Vitter about winning without a runoff that he moved his family from a suburb of New Orleans to Alexandria in central Louisiana for half of the summer before the election. He had learned that his campaign was weakest in that part of the state.

Now Vitter is leading the effort to transform Louisiana into a Republican state. He lined up 16 business leaders to donate $100,000 each for a war chest to promote a Republican takeover of the House and lured an experienced operative from Wash-

Fred Barnes is executive editor of THE WEEKLY STANDARD *and author of* Rebel-in-Chief *(Crown Forum).*

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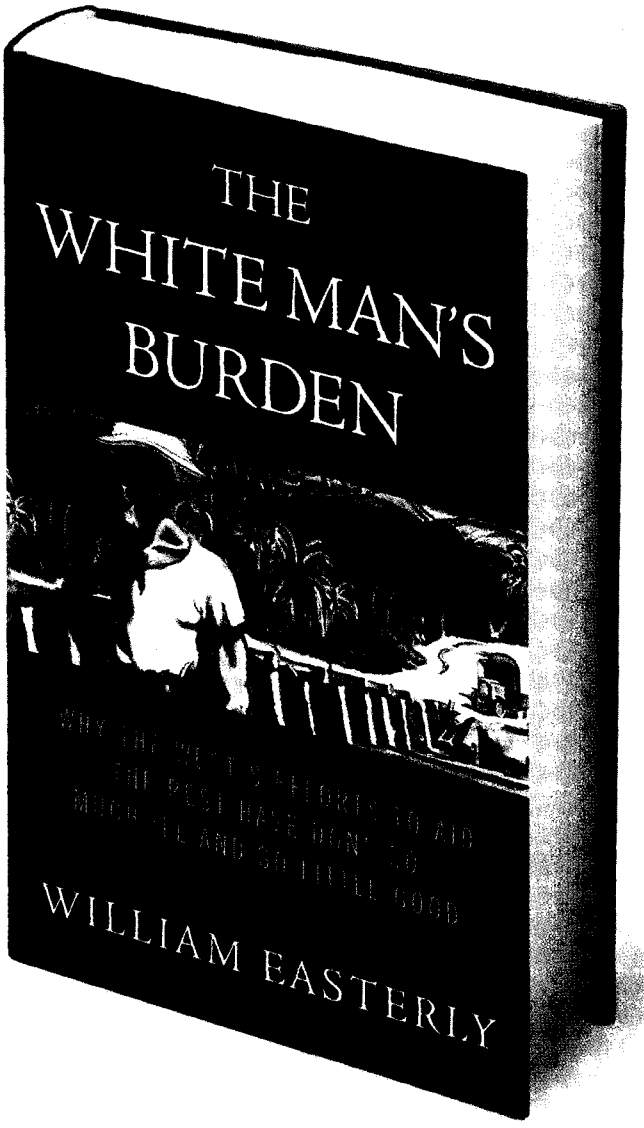
"An important book. Easterly asks the right questions, combining compassion with clear-eyed empiricism."

—*New York Times Book Review*, Virginia Postrel

"[William] Easterly focuses his keen analytic prowess on the utility of foreign aid...[he] shows why many of the development fads of the past 50 years—the big push, donor coordination, shock therapy—failed to do much good."

—*The Wall Street Journal*, Daniel W. Drezner



"This books offers any number of brilliantly reasoned insights into why traditional aid initiatives go awry, and it is just as scathing in its treatment of right-wing approaches to aid that are aimed at inducing poor countries to embrace free markets, democracy and clean government."

— *The Washington Post*, Paul Blustein

"A brilliant diagnosis... Easterly's 16 years as a World Bank economist and his broad experience in developing nations make the critiques hard to dismiss."

—*Business Week*

"An ambitious new book that is already causing waves...[Easterly] is merciless and witty, damning the aid industry with its own words by quoting its past, broken promises back to it."

—*The Economist*

"We should be grateful to Easterly for the wealth of material he has presented, thereby enriching the development literature."

—*Foreign Affairs*, Amartya Sen

The Penguin Press

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"Easterly's call for a more modest, results-oriented approach to aid is dead-on."

—*LA Times*, Daniel Kurtz-Phelan

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ington, John Diaz, to run the Committee to Elect a Republican Majority in Louisiana.

The 2007 election, Jindal says, is "a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity" for Republicans. "If we do things half right, we have a real shot at a Republican majority in the House," adds Vitter. "We feel very good about our chances to take the majority," says House Republican leader Jim Tucker of New Orleans.

Louisiana has lagged behind other southern states in tilting Republican. Instead, it evolved into a swing state, then stopped evolving. President Bush won the state easily in 2000 and 2004, but so did Bill Clinton in 1992 and 1996.

The state, says Vitter, "is different from other southern states." The main difference can be attributed to French Catholics, or Cajuns, who make up roughly one-third of the population. "It took a long time for them to make the transition to voting Republican," according to Vitter. "For a long time, they were a strong Democratic constituency." And blacks, who constitute another third of the population, still are. Louisiana also has fewer white Protestants, percentage-wise, than other southern states. And it has a fondness for populists and rogues, electing Huey and Earl Long and Edwin Edwards as governors. Edwards is now in federal prison.

It was Edwards who instigated the first big change—the creation in 1978 of the single, open primary—that spurred Republican growth. His intention was not to help Republicans. He happened to resent having to run in a primary, then a runoff, and finally against a Republican. He preferred a mass primary, maybe a runoff, and nothing more.

Republicans had been a tiny minority before the change. Since the action was in the Democratic primary, candidates and voters flocked to it. There was no incentive to run as a Republican and no reason for Democrats to switch parties. And while Republicans occasionally won statewide races, their victories never translated into Republican strength at the grassroots.

The open primary soon brought Republican gains. David Treen was elected governor in 1979. In 1991, Democratic governor Buddy Roemer became a Republican. In 1995, a Democratic state senator, Mike Foster, switched parties when he filed for governor and wound up winning two terms. And that same year, Democratic congressman Billy Tauzin became a Republican and was reelected without Democratic opposition.

Then came the Vitter surprise in 2004 and another party switch, this one by Congressman Rodney Alexander. Democrats complained bitterly that Alexander had waited until just before the filing deadline to change parties. Alexander had no trouble disposing of a last-minute Democratic challenger.

David Vitter, Bobby Jindal

Congressional Quarterly / Scott J. Ferrel

And here at the state capitol, Republicans have transformed themselves into a viable opposition party, at least in the House. By tradition, the governor appoints party leaders, but Republicans insisted last year on electing their own, Jim Tucker. "This is the first time they've been able to wheel and deal and they're taking advantage," says Loyola's Renwick.

With more than a third of the House, Republicans were able to block a cigarette tax increase of $1 a pack proposed by Blanco. Tax increases require a two-thirds majority in Louisiana. Post-Katrina, "the Republican party is well poised to become the party of change and reform," says Vitter. One reform Republicans championed was the consolidation of levee boards, a chronic source of cronyism and corruption. The legislature initially rebuffed levee reform, but it passed in a special session after a public outcry. Now Republicans want to shrink the bloated number of assessors, another relic.

Vitter and Jindal believe the biggest boost for Republicans is not the loss of population in New Orleans. "In the medium to long term, that impact will be very modest or negligible," says Vitter. "People are coming back." Indeed they are, but far fewer than fled when Katrina struck and not enough to restore the city's political power.

"The real change is not in the demographics, but in people's hopes and expectations," says Jindal. "There's a sense of urgency that the status quo is not acceptable." To gain political ground, Republicans must reflect that urgency and lead the movement to reform state and local government. But for now, the decline of New Orleans and term limits may be quite enough to propel them to victory in 2007. ♦

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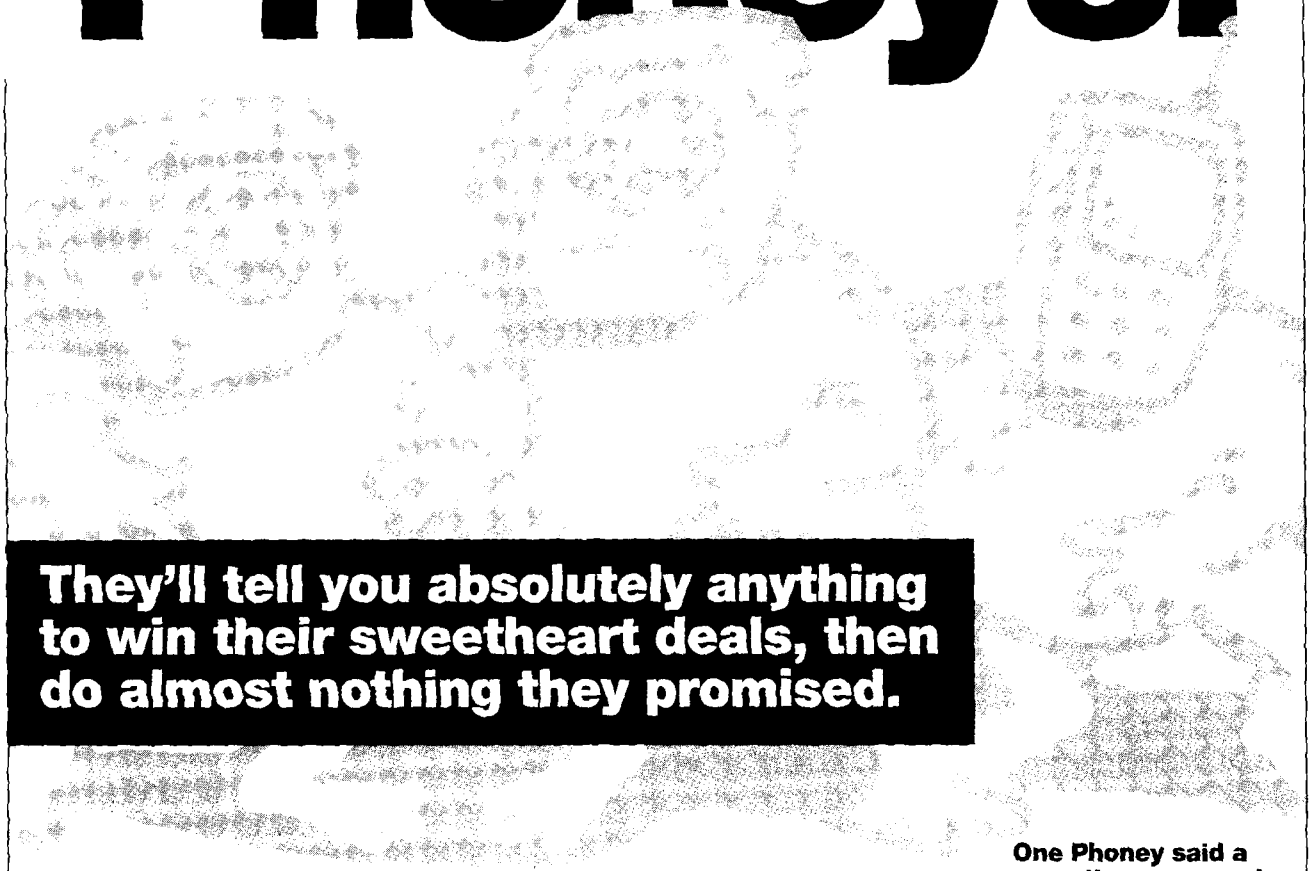
Meet the Phoneys.



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They say they support competition ... but they spent the last decade fighting competition while crushing their competitors.

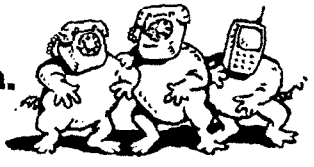
They'll tell you they will bring broadband to every neighborhood ... while they brag to Wall Street they plan to bring it primarily to the most affluent.

The Phoneys say they need "reform" to compete in video. But, ten years ago Congress gave them what they asked for ... now they're just waiting for more and more special favors.

One Phoney said a recently announced mega-merger was good for consumers ... then mentioned they will lay off 10,000 American workers. Wow, if they admit to 10,000 ... how many do you think they really plan to lay off?

They are the Phoneys ... the Bell monopolies.
With an incomparable history of saying anything to try and get their way.

Meet the Phoneys. Beware what lies beneath.



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The New McCarthyism

What the media aren't telling you about CIA leaker Mary McCarthy. BY STEPHEN F. HAYES

On April 19, 2006, security personnel from the Central Intelligence Agency escorted a senior CIA official from her office, withdrew her Top Secret clearance, and terminated her employment. The CIA did not name the officer. She was fired after she "acknowledged having unauthorized discussions with reporters in which the officer knowingly and willfully shared classified intelligence, including operational information."

The CIA did not name her, but several news organizations reported that the official was Mary McCarthy, whose most recent position at the Agency was in the office of the inspector general. Two days later, when McCarthy denied disclosing classified information to reporters, she asked a former colleague, Rand Beers, to make the statement on her behalf.

It was an interesting choice. McCarthy had worked for Beers on the National Security Council under President Bill Clinton. They had apparently remained close, even after Beers quit his position in the new administration and became a leading critic of the counterterrorism policies of George W. Bush. Or perhaps the two had remained close *because* Beers quit his position to criticize the Bush administration.

Beers was the senior foreign policy adviser to John Kerry's presidential campaign in 2004. In March 2004, Mary McCarthy contributed the maximum amount allowed under campaign finance laws—$2,000—to the Kerry campaign. She increased her giving as the competitive campaign drew to a close. On October 5, 2004, she gave another $5,000 to the Democratic party in Ohio, a state that many observers believed (correctly, it turned out) would decide the election. And on October 29, 2004, McCarthy gave an additional $500 to the Democratic National Committee Service Corps. Federal records show that Michael McCarthy, of the same home address, gave an additional $2,000 to the Kerry campaign and $500 to Barbara Mikulski, a Democratic senator from Maryland. In all, the McCarthy household contributed some $10,000 to Democrats during the last election cycle.

The *New York Times* reported McCarthy's $2,000 contribution to the Kerry campaign (but not the others), and articles sympathetic to McCarthy by the Associated Press and *Newsweek* at least made mention of Beers's association with the Kerry campaign. But virtually none of the other press found the facts in the preceding paragraph worth reporting.

In the current political environment, that's an odd oversight. Hardly a day goes by that we don't hear about the war between the White House and the CIA over politicized intelligence. Administration critics claim the White House selectively uses intelligence to support its policies, and administration supporters complain about a rash of leaks from unelected bureaucrats at the CIA determined to undermine those policies.

Observe these battles through the prism of the mainstream press, however, and you get the distinct impression that only one side is fighting: the White House. Something closer to the opposite is true and has been since the summer of 2003.

Consider. On May 6, 2003, *New York Times* columnist Nicholas Kristof wrote a column on weapons of mass destruction in Iraq, focused on President Bush's allegation that Iraq had sought uranium in Africa:

> I'm told by a person involved in the Niger caper that more than a year ago the vice president's office asked for an investigation of the uranium deal, so a former U.S. ambassador to Africa was dispatched to Niger. In February 2002, according to someone present at the meetings, that envoy reported to the C.I.A. and State Department that the information was unequivocally wrong and that the documents had been forged.
>
> The envoy reported, for example, that a Niger minister whose signature was on one of the documents had in fact been out of office for more than a decade. In addition, the Niger mining program was structured so that the uranium diversion had been impossible. The envoy's debunking of the forgery was passed around the administration and seemed to be accepted—except that President Bush and the State Department kept citing it anyway.

We now know that Kristof's "person" was Joseph Wilson. And we know that it was not possible for Wilson to have concluded that the documents were forged in February 2002 because, according to the Senate Intelligence Committee, the U.S. government did not receive the forgeries in question until October 2002. It was the first—and most reckless—of many lies Wilson would tell. The column ran under the headline "Missing In Action: Truth." No kidding. The column would set in motion a chain of events that would lead to the indictment of Scooter Libby, then Vice President Cheney's chief of staff.

On May 30, 2003, Kristof wrote a follow-up called "Save Our Spooks":

> A column earlier this month on this issue drew a torrent of covert communications from indignant spooks who say that administration officials leaned on them to exaggerate the Iraqi threat and deceive the

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> public. . . . These people are coming forward because they are fiercely proud of the deepest ethic in the intelligence world—that such work should be nonpolitical—and are disgusted at efforts to turn them into propagandists.

Some of these "nonpolitical" intelligence professionals were so outraged, Kristof reported, that they had formed a group called Veteran Intelligence Professionals for Sanity. The VIPS bought Wilson's claim that he had "determined that the Iraq-Niger report was a con-job" and his assertion that his "findings were duly reported to all concerned in early March 2002." False and false. At one point, the VIPS called for active intelligence officials to leak documents that would undercut the Bush administration and its claims on Iraq.

Not that some of these officials needed any encouragement. On June 9, 2003, *New York Times* reporter James Risen wrote under the headline: "Captives Deny Qaeda Worked with Baghdad." His article focused on two al Qaeda leaders, Khalid Sheikh Muhammed and Abu Zubaydah:

> Abu Zubaydah, a Qaeda planner and recruiter until his capture in March 2002, told his questioners last year that the idea of working with Mr. Hussein's government had been discussed among Qaeda leaders, but that Osama bin Laden had rejected such proposals, according to an official who has read the Central Intelligence Agency's classified report on the interrogation. . . . The Bush administration has not made these statements public, though it frequently highlighted intelligence reports that supported its assertions of links between Iraq and Al Qaeda as it made its case for war against Iraq.

A source described as "one official" made the accusation directly: "I remember reading the Abu Zubaydah debriefing last year, while the administration was talking about all of these other reports, and thinking that they were only putting out what they wanted."

You get the picture. The Bush administration selectively used intelligence to make its case, and nonpolitical intelligence professionals were simply setting the record straight. Only that's not what happened.

Whoever leaked the debriefing to Risen apparently gave him only part of it. Zubaydah did tell interrogators of bin Laden's reservations about being beholden to Saddam. (Newly released Iraqi documents demonstrate that despite these reservations, which date to at least 1992, bin Laden requested operational support from Saddam.) But the report also included this line, which contradicted the whole thrust of Risen's article: "Abu Zubaydah explained that [bin Laden's] personal goal of destroying the U.S. is so strong that to achieve this end he would work with whomever could help him, so long as al Qaeda's independence was not threatened." One other nugget from Zubaydah's March 2002 debriefing was omitted. He named a senior al Qaeda associate who did have good relations with the Iraqi regime: Abu Musab al Zarqawi, with whom Zubaydah had plotted attacks in Jordan.

When George W. Bush chose Rep. Porter Goss, a former CIA officer, to succeed George Tenet as director of central intelligence, Goss was widely portrayed as a partisan intruder on an apolitical agency. Some Democrats said Goss "seems too partisan" for the job, the *New York Times* guilelessly reported. An editorial in the paper labeled Goss a "partisan Republican" and urged Bush to withdraw the nomination and let the CIA's acting director serve through the 2004 election.

On October 1, 2004, with Goss less than a week into the job, the *Washington Post* ran an article noting the concerns of intelligence professionals that Goss was bringing with him to the Agency four of his top staffers from the House Intelligence Committee. "Some also expressed concern that newcomers from the Republican-run House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence would bring partisan sensibilities to their new roles. Concerns about partisanship and the CIA have been at the forefront of public debate over the agency's future in the past weeks."

Two days later, one of those staffers, Michael Kostiw, was the target of a nasty leak about a shoplifting incident from the early 1980s. The story appeared in the *Washington Post* and cited "four sources who were familiar with the past events but who asked not to be identified because of the sensitivity of the information." Kostiw was to have been executive director of the CIA. Two days after the story ran, he withdrew from consideration.

Those leaks came shortly after another damaging leak, this one of a National Intelligence Estimate on Iraq that challenged Bush's optimism and warned of possible civil war. The same day, John Kerry's presidential campaign incorporated the substance of this leak into its campaign message and charged that Bush was living in a "fantasy world of spin."

The leaks didn't stop after the election. The *Washington Post* ran its now-famous "secret prison" story on the CIA's handling of al Qaeda detainees in November 2005; the *New York Times* published its accusations of domestic wiretapping by the National Security Agency the following month.

Was Mary McCarthy a source for any of these stories? We don't know. Her lawyer, Ty Cobb, has said that she denies discussing any classified information with reporters. CIA spokeswoman Jennifer Millerwise Dyck, without naming McCarthy, says the official terminated last week acknowledged discussing classified information with reporters. A source that agreed only to be described as an "intelligence official," goes further. "There was a clear pattern of talking to the media."

We may never know why and what precisely McCarthy leaked. The fact that she contributed significant sums of money to John Kerry and Democrats may mean little more than that she wanted a better job in a new Kerry administration than she had been able to get under Bush.

In the midst of a three-year CIA-Bush administration battle over politicized intelligence, how can it be that journalists find these contributions irrelevant? ♦

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The Man Who Gave Us Welfare Reform

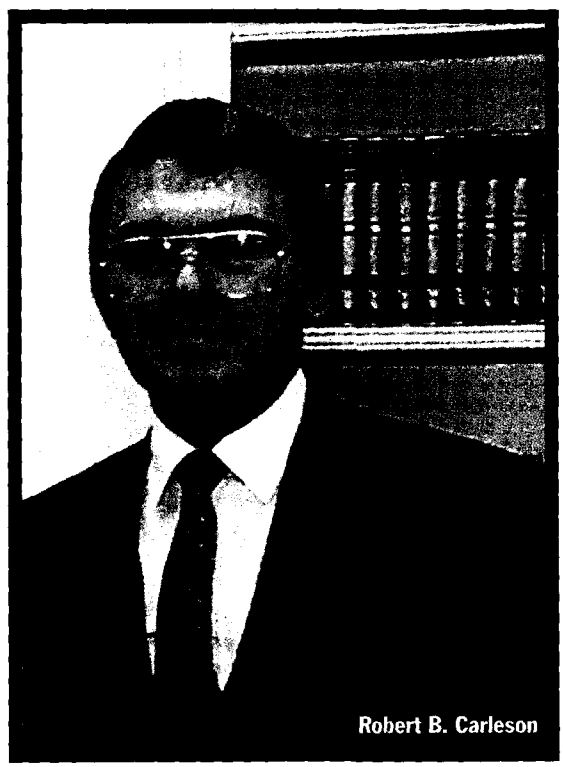
Robert B. Carleson, 1931-2006.

BY GARY BAUER

REAGANAUTS found themselves in mourning again last week as another of the Gipper's loyal servants unexpectedly passed away. Hard on the heels of the deaths of Caspar Weinberger and Lyn Nofziger came the sad news that Robert B. Carleson, architect of Reagan's welfare reform, had succumbed to complications from recent surgery. Hundreds of the old Reagan team gathered in the rotunda of the Ronald Reagan Trade Center, just a few blocks from the White House, to share a few tears and a few laughs, as a dozen old friends, led by former Attorney General Edwin Meese, reflected on Carleson's life and contributions to the Reagan revolution.

A glowing *Washington Times* editorial the day before the memorial service referred to him as "the Quiet Giant," and it was an apt description. Bob Carleson was seldom in the headlines during his years on the Reagan team and had no hunger for the spotlight. Yet Bob is considered by many to be the man who had the most to do with Ronald Reagan's journey from the governorship of California to the Oval Office.

At the beginning of Reagan's second term as governor, the state was facing a welfare crisis. California's welfare system was exploding, having added over one-and-a-half million people to the rolls in the previous ten years. Taxpayers were being hit with a bill for $2.5 billion a year. The legislature was in the hands of Democrats, who were ready to defend the failed system against any reform. But that didn't stop Reagan from announcing that reform was indeed at the top of the agenda, because the state was facing a "fiscal and human disaster."



Robert B. Carleson

Ronald Reagan Presidential Library

In true Reagan fashion, the president decided to put together a reform team that was as far removed from the welfare establishment as possible. The search led to a relatively obscure deputy director of the California Department of Public Works, Bob Carleson. In short order, Bob put together a task force that quickly delivered a plan to the governor that would help the truly needy while stopping the explosion in welfare bureaucracy and dependency.

The Democrats screamed in opposition. The Nixon administration wasn't happy, either. In true "me too" Republican form, the White House was headed down the same dead-end road of the past, with a national welfare plan built on failed liberal ideas. In short, Ronald Reagan and his trusted aide, Carleson, were opposed by everyone—except the people of California. Armed with Carleson's insightful analysis, Governor Reagan mobilized taxpayers and even threatened to put welfare reform on the ballot. Eventually, the entrenched welfare lobby saw the writing on the wall and folded.

Over the next three years the Carleson reform plan produced a decline of 300,000 in the welfare rolls, while aid for the truly needy actually went up. This was compassionate conservatism way ahead of its time. In fact, so successful was the Reagan model developed by Carleson that it helped launch the governor onto the national political stage. In his 1980 presidential campaign, Ronald Reagan pointed to the Carleson reform plan as his greatest policy achievement in California. When Reagan won, he brought Carleson with him to the White House as special assistant to the president for policy development. It was there that Bob and I met and became friends.

As we worked together in the "Reagan Revolution," it became clear to me that Bob Carleson was no mere number-cruncher or policy wonk. He was, in fact, a passionate man, which is not surprising since we worked for a president who was passionate about freedom and America. Bob had an incredible love for our country, believing, as Reagan did, that we had a special "rendezvous with destiny" that required us to be a "shining city on a hill." He was also passionate about the poor. Like most conserva-

Gary Bauer, director of the Office of Policy Development at the Reagan White House, currently leads the public policy group American Values.

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tives, he had to endure constant attacks from the political left, which attempted to smear him, along with Reagan, as cruel and hard-hearted. But Carleson cared so much about the poor that he devoted the majority of his adult life to trying to reform the failed programs that were creating generational poverty and cycles of dependency. Bob wanted the poor to have their dignity restored through work and education. He wanted to empower them by giving them the same choice that all Americans have. And in the process he remembered that every dollar that went to help the truly needy came out of the pockets of America's taxpayers.

Surprisingly, the reform Carleson set in motion gained momentum that kept going long after Ronald Reagan left office. In 1996, President Clinton, facing a GOP-controlled Congress committed to many of Carleson's ideas, finally caved and signed a national welfare reform bill. The "Quiet Giant" had prevailed again. ♦

Let the Generals Speak

It's not a problem for civil-military relations.

BY FREDERICK W. KAGAN

TIMES OF great national stress can create tensions between the senior civilian leaders of the nation and the general officers who serve them. This tension sometimes leads to open conflict, as between Lincoln and McClellan; Truman and MacArthur; and the "revolt of the admirals" in 1949. When Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Colin Powell publicly criticized Bill Clinton's determination to open the military ranks to homosexuals, a cottage industry sprang up warning of the imminent demise of civilian control over the military.

The recent spate of retired generals calling for Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld to step down has raised the red flag once again. Critics of these generals have called them "fools," "disloyal," and self-serving careerists. One calls their actions "wrong, destructive of good order and discipline in the armed forces, and prejudicial to functional civil-military relations." Another places them on a spectrum that leads to the sort of military factions one finds in "places such as Hussein's Iraq, Pinochet's Chile or your run-of-the-mill banana republic." Harsh words, indeed.

These attacks on the outspoken generals are misguided. They reflect an incorrect understanding of healthy civil-military relations, one that draws too heavily on traditional American fears of a standing army and too little on the need to ensure that the people of a democracy are sufficiently well informed to make sound decisions about their leaders in a time of war. There is no danger to the republic in a handful of retired generals speaking their minds. There is great danger in making vital decisions about an ongoing armed struggle without hearing the views of all available experts.

Many experts in the field of civil-military relations think harmony is the goal. Uniformed military should offer advice when it is sought, and do what it is told without demur whether or not that advice is accepted. Above all, disputes must be kept in-house. Some argue that officers should not even speak freely before Congress; others recognize the need for honest testimony when sought by Congress, but claim that officers should not put their views before the American people in any other fashion. Some go so far as to intimate that it may be wrong for officers to vote in elections—such voting makes them "partisans" and therefore restricts their ability to give impartial advice. For those in this camp, the demand of several generals that Rumsfeld step down—even though these generals are retired—represents a severe blow to good civil-military relations and a usurpation of power that should rest in the hands of the civilian leadership.

There is another way to look at this issue. America's senior civilian leaders are rarely experts in the art of war. Even Donald Rumsfeld, despite two tours as secretary of defense, has infinitely more expertise managing a large and complex bureaucratic corporation than he does planning or executing military operations. Few of

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the senior civilian leaders in the Pentagon have experience at high levels of military command; some have no military experience at all. Meanwhile, on Capitol Hill, the numbers of congressmen with military experience is rapidly dwindling. Increasingly these days, only the uniformed military, a few senior civilian leaders, and a small number of civilian experts have made the study of war (as opposed to military bureaucracy) their primary occupation. If this compartmentalization of expertise in war is combined with efforts to stifle the speech even of retired officers, it runs the serious risk of depriving the American people and their leaders of the critical advice and information they need to make sound decisions.

Regrettable as it might seem from this second perspective, it remains essential to curtail the speech of serving officers. An officer charged with executing a policy cannot publicly criticize that policy. He or she must understand that, after advice has been rendered and a decision is taken, the only options that remain are to "salute and move out smartly" and to resign. American officers do understand this fact. Truman fired MacArthur precisely because MacArthur had begun a campaign to undermine a decision Truman had already taken and which MacArthur was under orders to execute. The U.S. officer corps has internalized that lesson very deeply.

Does that mean that after they retire they shouldn't criticize policies with which they had been involved—but are no longer? That case is harder to see. Some argue that retired generals remain part of the corporate body of generals—that, one critic writes, is why we still call them "general." And it is true that sitting generals (and civilian leaders) frequently seek the advice of their retired predecessors. It is no doubt also true that retired generals who enter the field of politics, either by siding with political candidates or by calling for the resignations of senior officials, reduce their impartiality and even, perhaps, their credibility for participating in subsequent policy discussions. Such interventions may therefore be imprudent from a personal perspective, but they do not harm good order and discipline within the military or civil-military relations.

Critics of today's outspoken retired generals argue that their example of taking sides in political debates encourages their active-duty comrades to do the same; some claim this might lead to the creation of the sorts of military cliques and factions that can lead to coups. Neither fear is convincing. Military officers at all levels are deeply indoctrinated with the primacy of civilian control. They are perfectly capable of distinguishing between the statements of their active-duty superiors and retired generals. There is considerable evidence, furthermore—as anyone who has spent a lot of time talking with military officers privately knows—that disagreements, arguments, and strong feelings about the worthiness of the current civilian leadership long predated the public comments of a handful of retired generals. There is no evidence whatsoever that these feelings of officers at any level have led to failures to offer honest advice, failures to execute orders faithfully, or problems of any sort. There is no disease to treat here; there are not even any symptoms.

The claim that retired generals must not involve themselves in "partisan political" questions is even more problematic today than usual, because President Bush and Rumsfeld have repeatedly deflected criticism of their policies in Iraq onto the generals themselves. They have stated over and over that troop levels in Iraq and the strategies being pursued there are those recommended by the generals, and that more troops would be forthcoming and different strategies would be approved if the generals requested or offered them. When Rumsfeld testifies before Congress on Iraq or the defense budget, a general sits beside him, in his dress uniform, his stars gleaming under the lights. The presence of that general next to the secretary goes beyond tacit support. He is expected to offer verbal support to the secretary's policies as well, in the guise of impartial, professional advice. But what advice in such a situation could really be impartial and professional, unless the secretary and his general were in complete agreement? And how likely is it that there will be no serious disagreements between civilian leaders and generals?

In truth, it is not likely at all, except in two cases: that the civilian leaders promote only those they know to agree with them, or that the military officers prioritize loyalty to their civilian masters above giving them honest and impartial advice. Many of the critics of the outspoken retired generals today do blame them for disloyalty, even as those generals and other critics assert that Rumsfeld's Pentagon has been characterized by excessive groupthink and selective promotions.

The question of loyalty becomes critical here. Presidents and secretaries of defense always want their generals to be loyal to them. Generals frequently feel that they should be loyal to their civilian leaders in the same way that they expect their military subordinates to show them loyalty. But the oath of office of an American officer is to "protect and defend the Constitution of the United States," not to "be loyal to the present occupants of the executive branch." Even junior officers, moreover, are required to show discretion in their loyalty. They are forbidden, for instance, to carry out orders that they believe to be unlawful. Loyalty of officers to their superiors is not and cannot be unconditional.

Confusion in this matter helped lead to the disasters of the Vietnam war, as H.R. McMaster has pointed out so eloquently in his book *Dereliction of Duty*. The Joint Chiefs of Staff in the 1960s prioritized their loyalty to President Johnson and Secretary of Defense McNamara to such an extent

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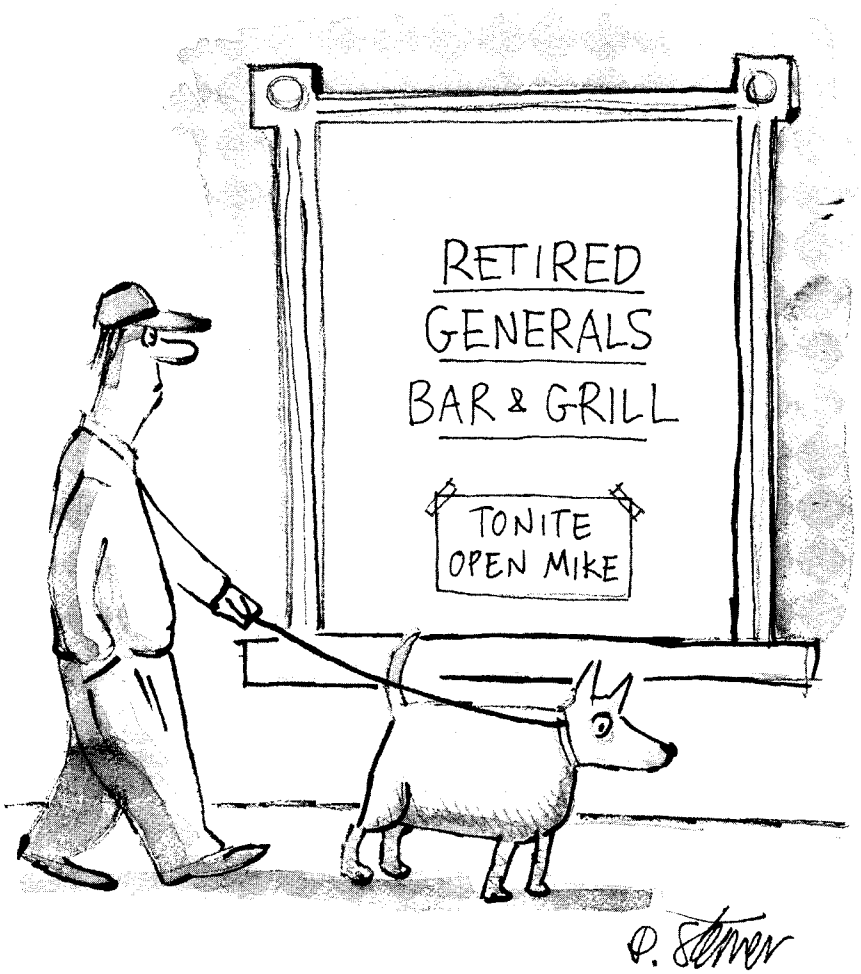

Peter Steiner

that they allowed their own views to be distorted, in their presence, before congressional committees. In truth, nothing so destroys the impartiality of advice essential to wise decision-making as the notion that senior officers must be first and foremost loyal to their civilian bosses.

The substance of the criticisms made by retired generals John Batiste, Charles Swannack, Anthony Zinni, and others is neither novel, nor entirely accurate, nor in every case very constructive. They have tended to focus on blaming Rumsfeld for past actions, rather than discussing current operations or offering concrete suggestions for improving American strategy in Iraq. But the quality of these statements is not really what is at issue. The current crisis comes from the fact that these officers have not merely condemned Rumsfeld's policies, but called for his resignation. That demand, some say, crosses the line.

No active-duty general, it goes without saying, would ever be allowed publicly to demand the resignation of his superior officer—and any who did would likely be court-martialed. Officers are not even permitted to make derogatory comments about their superiors, according to statutes of the Uniform Code of Military Justice. Retired officers are not subject to the UCMJ; there is no statutory restriction on their speech. But should there not be some customary inhibition that restricts their advice to the bounds of their own professional expertise?

The answer is no. In the first place, retired generals are citizens in good standing with all the rights of their fellow citizens—rights that they have laid their lives on the line to protect. They should on no account be stripped of any of those rights, however wisely or foolishly they use them. In the second place, as we have learned many times in other contexts, free speech is not partable. Once we decide the retired generals can say some things and not others, the door is open to assail them for saying anything at all. And that would be a grave error, because, in the third place, we need their thoughts.

The United States is at war, as the president and the secretary of defense never tire of reminding us. But it is a complicated and confusing war. Rumsfeld himself has argued forcefully that traditional approaches will not solve the unique problems we face. In such a circumstance, it is the height of arrogance and folly to assume that the handful of military and civilian leaders who happen to be at the top of the power pyramid for the moment have all the answers.

Debates about strategy and policy in the global war on terror and in Iraq cannot be confined to polite discussions in the halls of the Pentagon. Not in a democracy. The American people and their elected representatives—not only the president and his subordinates—must be directly involved in these debates. They can only make informed decisions if they understand the issues. They can only understand the issues if those with the most expertise, knowledge, and experience share their wisdom freely.

No one will be pleased with everything retired generals have to say. No one is under any obligation to follow their advice, or even to take it seriously—generals are human, after all, and just as prone to mistakes of judgment as anyone else. But no one benefits from silencing them in the name of civilian control of the military. That solution to this nonproblem, in fact, can hurt us all. ♦

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Third and Long

Lynn Swann's substance-free campaign.

BY SALENA ZITO

Pittsburgh

Lynn Swann, Republican candidate for governor of Pennsylvania, walked into the room and instantly owned it. He was among five hundred or so guests attending a March fundraiser for Senator Rick Santorum with George W. Bush as the headliner. But it was Swann who was the man of the moment, rubbing elbows with Pittsburgh's elite in the tony suburban neighborhood of Sewickley, where he happens to live.

A half-hour later, Swann was on the other end of town, inside a Holiday Inn ballroom, joining some 300 people at the 2006 Pennsylvania African-American Political Convention. Although the event was billed as nonpartisan, the majority of the crowd were card-carrying Democrats. No coincidence there: Black Democrats are exactly the people Republicans are hoping Lynn Swann can win over.

Ed Rendell, Pennsylvania's incumbent governor, had just given a speech. He had emphasized the importance of voter participation and noted that he had killed legislation that would have required voters to show ID at the polls. He'd pointed to his accomplishments in minority contracts and education reform, and he had vowed to continue fighting the good fight.

Then, ten minutes after Rendell left, it happened again: Swann—Republican, self-proclaimed conservative—walked into the room and owned it. Only this time, the greeting he received was even bigger than what he had gotten in the rich, white, Republican neighborhood he'd just left.

Swann gave a speech, and it was terrific. There were no references to "back in the day" on the football field. Gone were the sports clichés from the early hours of his campaign. Goodbye Lynn Swann, one-time Pittsburgh Steeler, Super Bowl MVP, and football Hall of Famer. Hello Lynn Swann, candidate for governor.

"Imagine all the people who said 'Well, Lynn, this is not going to happen for you,'" he declared. He encouraged the crowd to never give up, to continue to strive for political influence: "Nobody is going to give it to us. . . . We have a chance to go to the polls and make it happen." After his speech, he did not head for the exit. He lingered, shook hands, and stayed until he was one of the last to leave.

It was a great night for Swann. He never looked better, never delivered better. And that is the problem. Four days later, sitting across from him in his campaign office, with press secretary Melissa Walters in attendance, I asked a series of simple policy questions, hoping to learn about his actual positions.

A half hour and over one hundred uses of the word "change" later, I left with a sinking feeling. On issues ranging from tort reform to education to property taxes, Swann had nothing specific to say. What kind of changes did he have in mind? He didn't say. The only answer I ever really got was "change."

I have been following the Swann phenomenon since its infancy nearly two years ago at the Pennsylvania Society political soirée. This annual must-be-seen-at event (held, oddly enough, at the Waldorf-Astoria in New York) is *the* party for Pennsylvania's political "It" girls and guys, has-beens, and wannabes.

Swann knew he would have competition for the party's endorsement from Bill Scranton, who was the lieutenant governor under Dick Thornburgh. The night before the revelry began, he called Scranton and advised him of his exploratory intentions.

Swann was fresh off the campaign circuit as a surrogate and opening act for none other than President Bush, and he was energized. The receiving line to greet him in New York was like that of a royal wedding. And he seemed to make a big impression on everyone there. From that moment on, the political whisper became, "What is up with Lynn Swann?"

No one knew where he stood on the issues, but no one, especially Team Scranton, was prepared for the Steeler effect. State committee members, who otherwise would have supported Scranton, began to hedge their bets, to see what would come of the Swann campaign.

Mike DeVanney, Scranton's political director, says of Swann's rapid rise in the endorsement process: "I think a lot of well-meaning people got caught up in the so-called star power of Lynn Swann.

"Many ardent Swann supporters maintained that Bill Scranton would be the better governor. . . . However, it was argued that Swann's star power would guarantee him fundraising equality with Ed Rendell, secure a majority of inner-city Philadelphia votes, and bring throngs of new voters to the Republican party."

And so it went. From political novice to clincher of the GOP endorsement, Lynn Swann had arrived, helped by some heavy-handed moves by the state party establishment and some campaign gaffes by Scranton. Still, the deck was cleared rather bloodlessly for Swann, well before a primary needed to take place.

Swann then went to Washington to hook up with the Republican

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Governors Association. He paid homage to the men who control the purse-strings, then slipped on the glass slippers and, once again, was the belle of the ball. Even Karl Rove had his picture taken with the brand new candidate.

In the polls, Swann has stayed within a few points of Rendell since the day he received the endorsement. Which is good news for the GOP: Having a Republican at the helm of electoral-vote-rich Pennsylvania just in time for the 2008 presidential election would be a juicy coup.

But there are serious gaps in Swann's candidacy. First and foremost, he's raised very little money. Second, and equally important, where's the substance?

"This campaign is going to be like no other," says Amber Wilkerson, Swann's deputy communications director, "in terms of ideas and how they are presented. . . . You are not going to see us following the same old rules."

"With Lynn Swann," she insists, "you have a different kind of candidate," one who is "basing his vision with the people of Pennsylvania . . . listening to what the people of the commonwealth are telling him . . . and that is revolutionary."

Then one more time, in case I missed it: "Lynn Swann is about change."

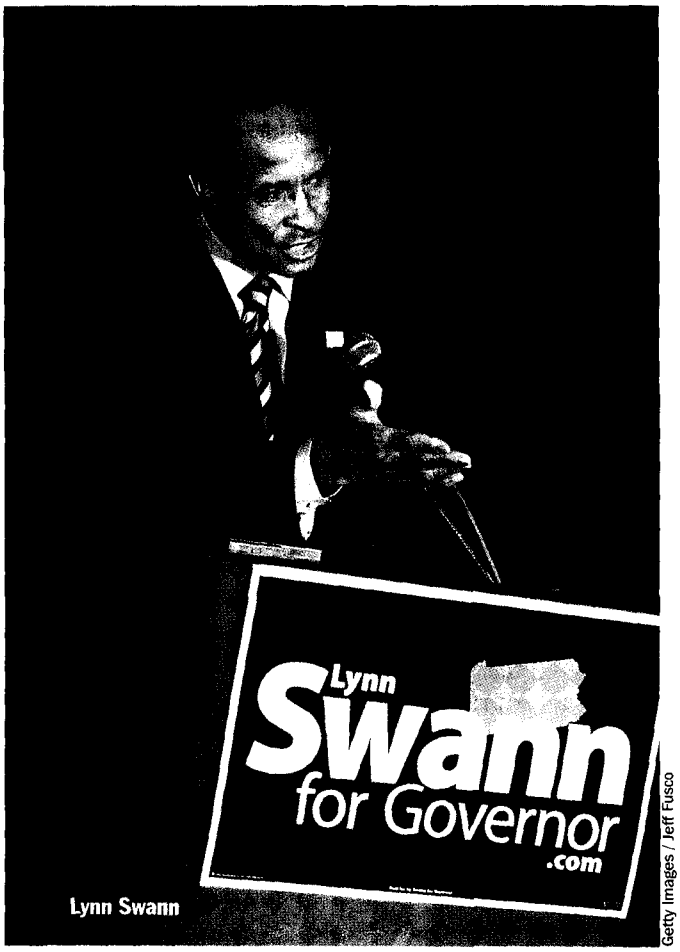
I talked to Ken Mehlman, chairman of the Republican National Committee, a couple of days before state financial reports revealed that Swann had raised only $1.5 million. Mehlman said he believed that Swann has the right stuff to run a competitive race against Rendell, who, by the way, has raised $15.5 million.

"The Republican party is confident that Lynn Swann can deliver Pennsylvania. . . . He brings a freshness and energy that no one else can deliver," Mehlman said. "Pennsylvania needs to come out from under the tax-heavy hands of the Rendell administration, and Swann is just the candidate to do that."

But what about the money? Party sources say Swann will not be handed a check anytime soon; he must first prove he can raise money on his own, while staying competitive in the polls. The rule of thumb is that the party's bank will not be tapped for any candidate who is 15 points ahead or behind in the polls. The decision whether to help with funding is typically made in July.

Mike DeVanney, Scranton's man, sees it this way: "In order to defeat Ed Rendell, you need to raise a great deal of money, build a first-rate field organization, and articulate a clear message. The good news for the Swann campaign is that this election is still months away."

Word got back to Swann's campaign that I was not exactly blown away by the interview he gave me. A new communications director, Lenny Alcivar, had come on board, and he got in touch. Alcivar, who was deputy press secretary for both Rudy Giuliani and the 2004 Republican National Convention, offered me more time with Swann, though that never panned out because Swann was on the road quite a bit. At least the new communications team was returning phone calls and emails, a big improvement. But the message coming from Swann's people was still far from illuminating: This is a campaign about change, they kept saying.



Lynn Swann

Getty Images / Jeff Fusco

Republicans do well on issues. The strength of the conservative movement lies in offering clear choices on issues that affect people's daily lives: homeownership, tax cuts, and core values.

Yes, the election is still far off, and Swann is competitive in the polls. But all Rendell would need to do is go on the air with negative ads about Swann's lack of substance for a couple of weeks, and Swann's goose would be cooked. He hasn't even the money, let alone the substance, to counter such an attack. And unless he soon gets a lot of both, the novelty will wear off and reality will sink in.

Lynn Swann does have a lot of the right stuff. He's energetic. He connects with people. He breaks the mold, being black and not a Democrat. And he could probably deliver a message, if only he had one. ♦

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Mr. Jefferson's Wage Slaves?

The latest campus fad reaches the University of Virginia. BY SONNY BUNCH

Charlottesville

DRIVING HERE the weekend after 17 students were arrested for occupying an administration building for four days, I wasn't sure what to expect. The University of Virginia, my alma mater, has rarely been a hotbed of political activism, yet reports in the press had suggested that tensions were high. As I wound my way through the University's grounds, things looked normal; students were enjoying a break in the morning rain to play a round of frisbee-golf, prospective students were touring the campus with their parents, and a couple dozen hardy souls were lined up outside the local record store, Plan 9, trying to score Dave Matthews Band tickets. This wasn't exactly Kent State, circa 1970.

Instead, it was one more campus with a "living wage" campaign, a small student movement calling on the university to raise the pay of its janitors, cafeteria staff, and other unskilled workers. Present at various colleges for about a dozen years, the movement claims several successes around the country, including at Georgetown, Washington University, Johns Hopkins, and Harvard.

At UVA, the demonstrations that began on April 12 and led to the arrests at Madison Hall on April 15 attracted up to 200 students, according to the organizers—this at a university with 20,400 students. The "living wage" they sought was $10.72 an hour (up from the university's base rate of $9.37), a figure recommended by the union-funded Economic Policy Institute. (The Center for Union Facts reports that the AFL-CIO, the Service Employees International Union, the American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees, the National Education Association, and the American Federation of Teachers together have donated more than $1.1 million to the group.) The organizers and some media reports have left the impression that campus sentiment is running strongly in favor of the "living wage," but the truth is more complicated.

It fell to UVA's student newspaper, the *Cavalier Daily*, to take the *Washington Post* to task for an account of the arrests that virtually ignored the views of students opposed to the sit-in and gave short shrift to the position of the university. Said the *Cavalier*'s April 20 editorial, "The slant of the article was most evident in its closing paragraph, which read, 'The sentiment appears to be spreading. A jogger running past Madison Hall yesterday morning shouted out, "What do we want?" A man sitting on a bench shouted back, "A living wage."'"

To make the case for widespread sympathy on campus, UVA's Living Wage Campaign touts a student referendum this spring that gleaned 77.5 percent support for the cause. But it ignores the fact that only a quarter of students bothered to vote.

One alumnus and longtime professor of politics, Larry Sabato, offers some perspective on the scale of the protests. At the height of the Vietnam-era demonstrations at UVA, when he was president of the student council, Sabato recalled, "the antiwar fervor was intense, and also the civil rights movement was very much a part of campus life. . . . In the '70s, protests were very widespread. Everyone was interested in something. This is a tiny group. A tiny group."

Yet it has numerous supporters on the faculty. A group of faculty members recently composed a letter backing the student-led campaign, which can be found via the University of Virginia website. The 223 signatories include noted leftists—like anthropology professor Wende Marshall, who once denounced UVA as a "bastion of white supremacy," and history professor Julian Bond, the former NAACP chairman who has proclaimed the Republican party "the Taliban wing of American politics"—but not a single member of the economics department.

One UVA economist, meanwhile, spoke up on the other side. In a *Cavalier Daily* op-ed, economics professor Edwin T. Burton laid out the case against the "living wage."

"The argument that a minimum of $10.72 an hour would have no impact upon the pool of workers that the University draws from is one made only by those whose future prospects are far beyond these minimums," Burton wrote. "If $10.72 has no effect on employment, then why stop there? Why not settle on a minimum of $25 per hour or even $100 per hour? . . . Raising the minimum will inevitably exclude more and more potential employees the higher you raise the minimum."

While no one is talking about $25 an hour, it is true that the Living Wage Campaign has proven its unwillingness to take yes for an answer.

When I was a first-year student at Mr. Jefferson's university, the Labor Action Group (the forefathers of the Living Wage Campaign) sported bright orange buttons emblazoned with "$8," signaling their desire for all employees to be paid a minimum of $8. The Board of Visitors approved a minimum wage of $8.19 in late 2000, and over the ensuing five years the school's president, John Casteen, proceeded to raise wages to $8.88,

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then, this year, to the present $9.37. According to a letter sent by Casteen to university employees, employee benefits including health care are worth an additional $3.29, for hourly compensation valued at $12.66.

Those involved with the Living Wage Campaign counter that health insurance does not put food on the table, though they continue to include health insurance when calculating their wage. As Casteen wrote in his letter, "One can understand wanting to have it both ways, but the immediate problem here is that one does not get it both ways when dealing with public employment in this state."

Weak in the area of economics, "living wage" proponents couch their arguments in moral terms. At UVA, students claim that the school's practice of paying janitors almost twice the federal minimum wage "compromises the values of the university."

As Living Wage Campaign activist Victoria Young told me in an email, "This University uses the rhetoric of 'Jeffersonian tradition' and 'Jeffersonian ideals.' . . . In a recent meeting, a top administrator told students that 'social justice has nothing to do with the mission of the university.' . . . If UVA is so proud of being a leader in so many fields, it should step up and be a leader in paying its workers a wage which is adequate to support a family in Charlottesville."

(Needless to say, not all "living wage" crusaders are admirers of Jefferson; in a recent issue of *Critical Mass*, UVA's most radical magazine, student commentator Nathaniel Whelden called Jefferson "a slave owner and rapist who got rich off slavery and thus established this university.")

Opponents of the "living wage" in turn use moral reasoning of their own. Josh Hess is one of the student founders of the opposition Market Wage Campaign.

"The primary risk is that any time you impose an artificial wage floor, you diminish the ability to employ labor," Hess explained. "You place stress on retaining the current labor pool and make it hard to hire people in the future. An artificial wage floor plus benefits makes it vastly more difficult for people to have a chance at getting hired."

It's hard to know exactly how a wage increase would play out in Charlottesville, but even if there were no immediate layoffs, it's likely that fewer people would be hired in the future by the university, the largest employer in the area. Either way, the good news for anyone interested in the economic facts on the ground is that local unemployment currently sits at an impressively low 2.5 percent. Why mess with a good thing? ♦

A MESSAGE FROM BIN LADEN

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Patient Power

The FDA doesn't have to decide everything.

BY JOHN E. CALFEE

THOUSANDS OF multiple sclerosis (MS) patients got an all-too-familiar message recently: Their lives are ruled by experts. The issue was their access to Tysabri, a breakthrough biotech drug with a unique ability to slow down the debilitating progression so feared by MS patients. The manufacturers pulled Tysabri from the market after two patients died from an unexpected side effect. Now the FDA has to decide whether to let the drug come back after new research has verified its potency against MS while also suggesting a 1 in 1,000 chance of the fatal side effect.

The FDA did what it usually does in these situations. It convened an advisory committee of experts. They got it half right. They unanimously recommended putting the drug back on the market. But they split on the crucial question of whether to recommend using the drug as a first-line therapy instead of waiting until patients fail on the current crop of drugs. And the committee strongly suggested that the FDA put together a potent "risk management" scheme to make sure Tysabri is used the way the FDA thinks it should be used.

Then the FDA's own experts took over. They are expected to reach a decision in the next month or so. No one thinks they will keep the drug off the market—but the FDA still has to decide which MS patients it will allow to use Tysabri and which patients it will keep from using Tysabri.

What about the patients, you ask? Well, a bunch of them testified at that advisory committee meeting, shuffling about with canes and wheelchairs, and almost all of them begged the FDA to bring Tysabri back. But as a cable news anchor said, the FDA decides on the basis of science, not emotion. Experts only, please.

In this instance, however, science doesn't have the answer. The issue, after all, is not whether the drug works or whether it sometimes kills people. It is whether the trade-off is worth it: Is a 1 in 1,000 chance of dying a risk worth running in order to reduce the much-feared "relapses" associated with MS by two-thirds or to diminish the formation of brain lesions by 83 percent? The experts on these questions are the patients. They are the only ones who can balance quality-of-life against the risk of death. Their views should be absolutely paramount.

Critics of patient power can correctly point out that people who testify at FDA hearings are not representative. MS sufferers who are happy enough without Tysabri, for example, are unlikely to travel to suburban Maryland to talk for three minutes before a panel of silent doctors and bureaucrats.

But, as it happens, we know quite a lot about what MS patients in general think of Tysabri. In addition to the usual clinical trial evidence on safety and efficacy, we have exceptionally sound survey data. In order to discover the preferences of MS patients, I worked with survey researchers at Roper Public Affairs to conduct a representative survey funded by Biogen Idec, one of the manufacturers of Tysabri. What we found is spectacular.

Roughly half of MS patients want to take their chances with Tysabri and its potentially fatal side effects. This feeling is consistent throughout the MS population regardless of level of disability. In other words, patients who are still early in the progression towards severe disability are about as interested in Tysabri as those who are already using canes and wheelchairs.

The patients also have strong feelings about FDA regulation. Seventy-one percent agreed with the statements, "If a drug has safety concerns, the FDA should warn people, but I should be free to decide with my doctor whether to use those drugs or not," and "I am capable of making my own treatment choices, based on the information and advice I get from my doctor." Patients want FDA expertise, but not FDA fiat putting valuable drugs out of reach.

This is not to say the patients want to decide everything all by themselves. Far from it. Three-fourths of our sample had seen their neurologist at least four times in the previous two years and usually talked about drug side effects. Eighty-one percent said they would be willing to visit their neurologist more often in order to get a better but riskier drug (only 2 percent disagreed; the rest agreed "somewhat").

There is some very good news here. The FDA has been under so much pressure in the past year and a half to crack down on risky drugs that you might think it would have a tough time with a drug like Tysabri. But if it pays enough attention to what patients want, its job looks a lot easier. The FDA should tread lightly in its risk-management plan for Tysabri. This is no time to second-guess patients and neurologists about when to start using the most effective method to slow down the otherwise relentless progression of MS. Nor is it a good idea to burden them with sweeping controls over exactly when the drug is used, although the plan to keep close tabs on PML, the fatal condition that triggered Tysabri's withdrawal, certainly makes sense.

Finally, this is not just about Tysabri and MS. When it comes to trading off the risks and benefits of most drugs, the best experts are the patients themselves, while medical experts are just well-informed amateurs. The FDA needs to know what patients want, and it should give those preferences very great weight indeed. ♦

John E. Calfee is a resident scholar at the American Enterprise Institute. He was compensated by Biogen Idec for designing the survey discussed here, but not for analyzing its results or testifying before the FDA.

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Bush's Bad Polls

Look no further than the war for an explanation.

BY JEFFREY BELL & FRANK CANNON

THE USUAL WAY of analyzing the collapse in polls of public approval of the Bush administration is to make a list of all the things the analyst believes are going wrong and attribute the decline to those things. The polls provide plausibility for this method, because the president's performance rating has declined greatly on each of the individual issues that voters are asked about.

But the very universality of these declines should make us wary. In 2002, the U.S. economy was recovering sluggishly from the 2001 recession, yet Bush enjoyed solid public approval of his handling of the economy. Today, the economy has enjoyed three years of much faster growth without inflation—yet Bush's performance rating on handling the economy has collapsed just as precipitously as it has on other issues.

The truth is that in wartime, public perception of a president's handling of the war is more important politically than everything else combined. This was the case in 2002 as it is in 2006. The big difference between these two years, politically speaking, has nothing to do with today's much stronger economy. In 2002 the public rated Bush very favorably on the war on terrorism; today its verdict on him as a war leader is far lower and continuing to decline. And to voters in wartime, a president's handling of the war is not simply the most important of several issues. Fairly or unfairly, it shapes their opinion of him on every other issue as well.

Jeffrey Bell and Frank Cannon are principals of Capital City Partners, a Washington consulting firm.

The debate on the war has often taken the form of a debate on whether our decision to seek regime change in Iraq is a necessary, integral part of the larger war on terrorism, or a diversion from it, as many Democrats have argued. It seems likely that Bush has won this debate, but winning or losing this debate has lost its political salience.

That is because the central fact of today's political landscape is that Iraq is seen by voters as going badly—so badly that it is affecting the rest of the war on terrorism. Iran has become more and more aggressive in its nuclear ambitions; there is an upsurge of Taliban activity in Afghanistan; Syria has reverted to terrorism and assassinations in Lebanon; democracy in the Arab world is meeting new resistance in Egypt and elsewhere—pick your own bad-news list. To voters who still believe Iraq is a diversion from the larger war, these non-Iraq developments represent vindication. If Bush hadn't invaded Iraq, they argue, we would have more resources to fight all the other battles.

Far more important is the reaction of voters who always agreed with Bush about the strategic centrality of Iraq, or have come to believe in its centrality in the years since the invasion. The key premise Bush and all these voters share is that success or failure in Iraq will affect success or failure in a war of global reach. To increasing numbers of these voters, such disturbing events as the escalating challenge from Tehran are a sign that U.S. frustration in Iraq is beginning to mean what Bush always said it would mean: marked progress, perhaps even victory, for Islamist radicals in the war as a whole.

Is Iraq going as badly as voters believe it is? There is much evidence that it is not. But this is another argument of declining political relevance. The reason lies in the nature of asymmetric warfare. By definition, the weaker side in an asymmetric war cannot prevail militarily. Its central objective is to convince the political decision-makers of the superior side that continuing the war is an exercise in futility. That is why the Communists' Tet offensive of early 1968 could be, at one and the same time, militarily disastrous and politically decisive in inducing the United States to terminate its involvement in the Vietnam war.

Our enemies in Iraq, particularly Abu Musab al Zarqawi, clearly have studied Tet and learned well. At each stage of the three-year conflict in Iraq, Zarqawi has chosen tactics of high psychological impact on America's home front over conventional military success in Iraq. Each of a series of tactics—the beheading of western hostages, suicide bombings in civilian areas, roadside bombs aimed at American soldiers, and (most recently) terror attacks on Shiite mosques designed to provoke a wave of ethnic cleansing—have been well designed to make American voters and political elites feel an overwhelming sense of futility.

The explicit connection to Tet in the thinking of the enemy was recently underlined by the discovery by allied forces of a plan to attack and occupy the U.S. embassy in Baghdad. In 1968, one of the most potent blows of the war was struck by the Vietcong when it invaded and briefly occupied part of our embassy grounds in Saigon—a move that had absolutely no military significance yet was reported around the world as a devastating symbol of American failure.

If our view is right, nothing the administration does on the economy, health care, immigration, or any other non-war issue will affect the president's overall performance rating very much. Only a change in

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public perception of the administration's handling of the war on terrorism is capable of doing that.

Does that imply that only a sharp reduction of enemy activity in Iraq could improve the public's rating of Bush's handling of the war? If so, it is very bad news. Given the track record of Zarqawi's success in Tet-style asymmetric warfare, there's a very good chance he and his friends could come up with new psy-war tactics to demoralize American voters and political elites. If the past is prologue, such tactics could easily be executed even at times when American and Iraqi government forces were achieving great progress in pure military terms, or even in the midst of an American-Iraqi push to successfully counter the earlier Tet-style tactics. Asymmetric warfare, after all, does not require armed strength or military success on the part of the weaker power, but only an ability to keep undermining the political will of the stronger power.

An American military withdrawal from Iraq, whether swift or gradual, announced or tacit, would be even less likely to improve the public's rating of Bush as a war president.

If a withdrawal came in the wake of a visible movement toward victory in Iraq, it would of course be welcomed. But that scenario implies fulfillment of the goal of swift, near-term movement toward victory in Iraq, which by the nature of asymmetric warfare, and the enemy's mastery of it, is highly unlikely.

A U.S. withdrawal in the absence of visible progress, on the other hand, would be devastating to Bush. For voters who bought Bush's argument on the centrality of Iraq in the larger context of the world war on terrorism, it would be something very close to an admission of global failure. And for voters who always thought Iraq was a diversion or sideshow, it would be taken as ratification of their long-held view that Bush spilled our blood and treasure in Iraq for nothing.

Looking only at Iraq, and its intimate relationship to the decline of voter confidence in Bush's handling of the presidency as a whole, the picture is bleak and unlikely to change very much in the foreseeable future.

But this view is claustrophobic, because it leaves out Bush's handling of the rest of the war on terrorism. This is the one issue where Bush's ratings have remained respectable. And it is the one area with considerable upside potential for a change in voters' overall view of Bush.

Why? Because most voters now believe this is a world war. This includes many if not most voters who disagreed with the president's decision to invade Iraq.

Yes, visible progress toward achieving democracy in Iraq would be a positive force all over the Arab and Islamic world. Bush is right about that, and that is why success in Iraq is still worth sacrificing for. But the nature of a world war, which this is, implies that the relationship goes both ways—indeed, in all directions. That is, positive developments in any one sector of the battlefield are capable of reverberating back through all the others.

The truth is, even as the struggle in Iraq has intensified over the past three years, other fronts in the world war have become far more active than they were earlier. Think of the suicide bombings in Madrid and London. Think of the expulsion of the Syrian Army from Lebanon. Think of the cartoon crisis, which originated in Denmark and caused riots and mass killings far and wide—some of the worst of which came in Nigeria.

Think, above all, of the Islamist regime in Iran. A regime that threatens repeatedly to annihilate Israel, that threatens to make its nuclear program completely secret, that threatens to share nuclear technology with the genocidal regime in Sudan and (at least by implication) with nongovernmental terrorist groups like Hamas and Hezbollah. This, don't forget, is the same regime whose willingness to stonewall in negotiations coincided with the political demise of one American president (Jimmy Carter) and came quite close to bringing down another (Ronald Reagan).

President Bush has never ruled out the use of military force against this toxic regime. But all high officials on his second-term foreign-policy team—including his secretary of state, secretary of defense, national security adviser, and director of intelligence—act not just as if this is not under active consideration, but as if the very idea were absurd. They shrug off the simple reality, abundantly plain to the most casual American voter, that Iran is moving ahead with obtaining and (in the regime's own stated scenarios) disseminating nuclear weapons. They act as if our utter failure to deter Iran is less important than the fact that we are not being attacked as warmongers by France and Germany.

Their body language says that Iraq has tied our hands everywhere else. If that is true, then engaging in Iraq has in fact handcuffed the United States in a world war, and the Bush administration will not make a comeback in public opinion.

But if, as we believe, Bush and the majority of American voters are right—in their belief that Iraq is one front, important but not all-encompassing, of a much wider war—then a failure to act elsewhere will also deny the administration a comeback, because most Americans believe that acting elsewhere is possible, and may in certain grave circumstances be required.

The president's decision on who is right—those who would handcuff him because of Iraq, or those who believe a world war sometimes requires grave, unpleasant decisions on more than one front—will almost certainly determine the future of his presidency in the eyes of the American electorate as a whole. ♦

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No More Vietnams

This time, let's finish the job

By David Gelernter

Not long ago Richard Cohen of the *Washington Post* wrote a column about Iraq headlined "As in Vietnam, dereliction of duty all over again." The Vietnam analogy has been part of the Iraq war story since the fighting started (in fact, since before it started). The Bush administration often deals with its critics by ignoring them. This time it can't. Too much rides on the president looking these critics in the eye and telling them: Damned right this is Vietnam all over again. Only this time we will not get scared and walk out in the middle. This time we will stand fast, and repair a piece of the American psyche that has been damaged and hurting ever since we ran from Vietnam in disgrace way back in April 1975.

Of course any citizen is welcome to criticize the conduct of any war—tactfully, without giving aid and comfort to the enemy. Maybe we are doing things all wrong in Iraq. But those who launch the Vietnam analogy at the administration are lobbing heavy artillery for a different reason. They are predicting (with obnoxious *schadenfreude*) that Iraq will turn out like Vietnam in the end: We will proclaim ourselves beaten, give up, and go home. The sooner we understand this, the sooner we will do the intelligent and humane thing and surrender.

These critics ought to be told firmly that Iraq *is indeed* another Vietnam. Once again we are in the middle of cleaning out one of the world's ugliest abscesses, which turns out (again) to be infected and putrefying.

In Iraq as in Vietnam, the government gave the American people an unrealistic estimate of how hard the war would be. Both times it was an honest but costly mistake, which could probably have been avoided.

In Iraq as in Vietnam, it's impossible to say whether our intervention was justified by self-interest. (Churchill: "It is not given to the cleverest and most calculating of mortals to know with certainty what is their interest. Yet it is given to quite a lot of simple folk to know every day what is their duty.") In Iraq as in Vietnam, we have promised to rescue a suffering people from its tormentors. (Our duty was not to plant democracy in Iraq; our duty was to put an end to unbearable suffering. But planting democracy seemed like the only way to accomplish this goal, unless we were bucking for a new colony.) In Iraq as in Vietnam, the fighting is ugly and bloody. But in Iraq, unlike Vietnam, we will stay until we are finished.

Not many nations get a second chance to show the world and themselves that they are serious after all, that their friends *can* trust them and their enemies *ought* to fear them. There is no way we can atone for the blood and death we inflicted (indirectly) on South Vietnam by abandoning it to Communist tyranny. That failure can never be put right. But we *can* make clear that "No More Vietnams" is a *Republican* slogan. It means that we will never again go back on our word and betray our friends, our soldiers, and ourselves.

Most wars bog down in hard fighting at some point or other. When that happens, America must be able to trust itself not to run away. George Washington and his men did not run away after General Howe took Philadelphia for the British in September 1777, and Washington's counterattack on Germantown failed in October, and the brand new American army had to settle into miserable, freezing winter quarters at Valley Forge. Every American schoolchild used to know what Valley Forge meant: Stand firm and fight, no matter how terrible things are. The Union army did not run away in the fall of 1862, although Lee and Jackson had won a huge Confederate victory at Second Bull Run, and Lee had crossed the Potomac into Maryland and was threatening Washington, Baltimore, and (again) Philadelphia, and was expected to capture all of Maryland and a crucial railroad bridge in Pennsylvania—which would just about cut the Union in two. But Lincoln and the Union did not give up.The Confederates didn't run away either. Their cause was wrong, but they stood up heroically and fought till they were crushed to bits.

Nor did the American army run away 80 years later in the spring of 1942, although the Pacific fleet had been smashed at Pearl Harbor, Manila had been evacuated, Bataan had surrendered after a desperate, starving defense—and then Corregidor had surrendered too. But MacArthur promised that Americans would return to liberate the Philippines, and that's just what happened.

The United States has no tradition of running away.

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The left had better get this straight: Vietnam was an aberration. There will be no more Vietnams.

Those who think that "no more Vietnams" means that cowardice is the better part of wisdom don't know their Vietnam history either. There are many important lies in circulation about Vietnam, like counterfeit $50 bills that keep resurfacing. Those who held these views during the war itself weren't liars; in most cases they were telling the truth as they understood it. But decades later, it requires an act of will to keep one's ignorance pristine.

Lie #1: We were wrong to fight the Vietnamese Communists in the first place; they only wanted what was best for their country. In *Why We Were in Vietnam*, Norman Podhoretz summarizes Vietnam after the Communist victory. He quotes the liberal *New York Times* columnist Tom Wicker, outspoken critic of the war, on its aftermath. "What Vietnam has given us instead of a bloodbath [is] a vast tide of human misery in southeast Asia." He quotes Truong Nhu Tang, minister of justice in the Provisional Revolutionary Government that ruled South Vietnam after the Americans were ordered by Congress to run away: "Never has any previous regime [previous to the Communists] brought such masses of people to such desperation. Not the military dictators, not the colonialists, not even the ancient Chinese overlords." Prominent South Vietnamese were thrown into prison and tortured with revoltingly inventive cruelty. Virtually the whole South Vietnamese army and government were herded into concentration camps. Tang fled Vietnam in 1979, one of untold thousands who put to sea in crowded, rickety boats. Anything to get free of Communist Vietnam, the workers' and peasants' paradise, Fonda-land by the Sea. In Vietnam, as everywhere else on earth, communism was another word for death.

Lie #2: The Vietnam war was unwinnable. We had no business sending our men to a war they were bound to lose. The Communist Vietcong launched their first major coordinated offensive in January 1968—the "Tet offensive." "Tet was a military disaster for Hanoi," writes the historian Derek Leebaert. "Intended to destroy South Vietnamese officialdom and spark a popular uprising, Tet ironically had more of an effect in turning South Vietnam's people against the North." But America had been fighting ineffectively. In May 1968, Creighton Abrams replaced William Westmoreland as supreme American commander in Vietnam and U.S. strategy snapped to, immediately. With Abrams in charge, the war "was being won on the ground," writes the historian Lewis Sorley, "even as it was being lost at the peace table and in the U.S. Congress." The British counterinsurgency expert Sir Robert Thompson commented on America's "Christmas bombing" campaign of 1972, which devastated the North: "You had won the war. It was over." American anti-warriors insisted on losing it anyway.

Lie #3: As the American people learned the facts, they turned against the war and forced America's withdrawal from Vietnam. Actually, Americans continued to support the war nearly until the end. The 1972 presidential election was a referendum on the war; "Come home, America!" said the antiwar Democrat George McGovern—and he lost to Richard Nixon in a landslide. Of all U.S. population segments, 18-to-24-year-old men—who were subject to the draft, who did the fighting—were consistently the war's strongest supporters. "It was not the American people which lost its stomach," writes historian Paul Johnson, "it was the American leadership."

Lie #4: The real heroes of Vietnam were the protesters and draft-resisters who forced America to give up a disastrously wrong policy. If this was heroism, it was dirt cheap heroism. While college students paraded and protested and whooped it up, America's working classes bore the brunt of the fighting, bleeding, and dying. Around 80 percent of the 2.5 million enlisted men who fought in Vietnam came from poor or working class families. They lacked the law-breaking and draft-evading skills that their better-educated countrymen could draw on. And they lacked the heart to say no when their country called. Reread Norman Mailer's gorgeously written yet (like the smell of marijuana) faintly disgusting *Armies of the Night*, about a massive antiwar march on the Pentagon. You will learn or relearn all about the passionate ingenuity of left-wing lawyers fighting for clients they admired—who were innately superior to the law but scared of the consequences when they broke it.

All these lies are present symbolically in the Vietnam wall near the Lincoln Memorial in Washington. Many other memorials, in Europe especially, have commemorated fallen soldiers by listing every name. The soaring (yet knotted-up, anguished) Thiepval Memorial Arch at the Somme, by Sir Edwin Lutyens (1924), is the most extraordinary and celebrated instance of the list-every-name school of memorial design. Our own wall is different, for one, insofar as it stands in a scraped-out hole in the ground; a symbolic open grave. Some day we will tear down that wall and fill up the open grave, and rebuild the wall above ground and re-engrave every name, and add two more words at the end. Two words the designer did not see fit to include. *Thank you.* On that day we will finally have gotten over Vietnam.

In the argument over Iraq we can see reflected (like ominous headlights in a rearview mirror) one of the central disputes of modern times—between a traditional "morality of duties" and a modern "morality of rights." Philosophers like to argue that these two worldviews are complementary. In fact they are contradictory. Each of these two worldviews yields an all-inclusive blue-

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print for society, with no room for further contributions.

Granted, it's convenient to speak of one's "duty" to help the poor and one's "right" of self-defense. No contradiction there. But think it over and you will see that, by laying out everyone's duties explicitly, you lay out everyone's rights implicitly; and vice versa. You have a right to self-defense—or, to put it differently, a duty to use no violence except (among other cases) in self-defense. Both formulas reach the same destination by different routes. By means of the "morality of duty," you shape society the way a sculptor carves stone; by the "morality of rights," you shape it the way a sculptor models clay. Two different, contradictory techniques.

The morality of duties originated in Judeo-Christianity, the morality of rights in Roman jurisprudence. The Hebrew tradition knows about rights—but only in the context of covenants, where two parties each acquire rights and responsibilities simultaneously. America's Founders and Framers spoke of rights, but might well have had this Judeo-Christian idea in mind.

But the modern preference for rights over duties has nothing to do with religion or covenants. And your choice between these two worldviews is important. Morality deals, after all, with how to conduct yourself—whereas a *right* ordinarily confers an advantageous position, to put it formally; having a right means that your will is favored over someone else's. It's therefore conceivable that the morality of duties *is the one and only kind of morality*; that a morality of rights is a contradiction in terms. It's conceivable that a "morality of rights" actually *rejects* morality in favor of some other way to organize society—I'll call it "rights-liberalism." Rights-liberalism might be better than traditional Judeo-Christian morality, or worse, or neither, but in any case I believe it is *not* morality. In fact, proponents of rights-liberalism seem to believe (though they rarely say so point blank) that it is the next step *beyond* morality.

Even if you don't care about religion, you might still choose the morality of duty, with its focus on an individual's obligations, over rights-liberalism—which focuses not on your duty but on what is coming to you. Many Republicans and conservatives *do* prefer to discuss duties; many Democrats and liberals would rather talk about rights.

Now when you assign someone a duty, he is responsible for carrying it out; when you assign him a right, someone else is responsible for guaranteeing it. Rights-liberalism is a worldview that centers on "make way for me"—and some find it unattractive for just this reason. "Ask not what your country can do for you," said JFK, "ask what you can do for your country." In other words: Don't ask for rights, dammit; ask for duties. Nowadays Kennedy's most famous line is dismissed as a routine call for good citizenship. But there is more to it than that. The statement was taken up with amazing enthusiasm. Every schoolchild knew it. The enthusiasm was partly because the line is catchy; it might also have reflected a deep-lying sympathy over the rising call for civil rights. But it's also true that America in 1961 was just on the point of seeing traditional morality swamped by rights-liberalism. People felt what was happening. No doubt some felt, too, that Kennedy was sticking up for an older, better worldview that was on its way out.

We find this same deep disagreement over Iraq. Should we talk about America's *duty* to protect itself, and do its best to protect other, weaker peoples? Or should we talk about Saddam Hussein's *right* to develop weapons so long as they aren't "weapons of mass destruction," and the Iraqi people's *right* to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness?

The problem with the second formulation is that it blacks out whenever we reach the hard questions. Who will police the rights of Iraq, and guarantee the rights of Iraqis? The usual answer is the U.N. or some other multinational concoction. In other words: nobody. Sometimes we do leave things largely to the U.N. The Security Council has just voted to freeze the assets of four prominent Sudanese: the first punitive measures ever against instigators of violence in the Darfur region—which so far has killed hundreds of thousands.

When conservatives repossess the motto "No more Vietnams," it will be a perfect occasion to address one of the most important questions of our time. Is American policy based on rights or on duties? Is America in Iraq because of *our* duties or *their* rights? If "their rights" is the answer, liberals are correct: We have stuck our necks out unnecessarily; we could just as easily have let someone else worry about it, the way France and Germany did. If the answer is "our duties," we had no choice. We had an obligation to take charge of our own safety in a world that is lousy with terrorists, and we had to face up to our obligations as the world's strongest nation. And obviously we have duties in nations besides Iraq also. America doesn't have the power to help everybody—which is no excuse for helping nobody.

American character is on the line. For the sake of this nation—of its good name, its big heart, the sacrifices of its many brave defenders, the genius of its creators—of its greatness, in short—conservatives had better not lose this fight.

The administration was wrong to let Americans get the idea that Iraq would be easy. But it was right to fight. And because Iraq is *exactly* Vietnam all over again, our eventual victory won't only be good for Iraq, the Middle East, and peace on earth. It will repair American self-respect. And it will turn the Friends of Cowardice, the U.S. Mothers for Despair, and all their allied groups back into the peripheral players they always used to be in this country—until Vietnam. ◆

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Back to Falluja

The Iraqi Army versus the Keystone Kops insurgency

By Michael Fumento

Al Anbar Province, Iraq

I arrived at Camp Falluja in Iraq's Anbar Province by Blackhawk at 4 A.M. on the morning of April 13. No sooner had I lain down in my bunk than I heard the "thump, thump, thump" of outgoing artillery, five rounds in all. I later learned they were illumination rounds, probably called in to light up the area around the Iraqi Army's Observation Post 3 (OP3) in Karma, just northeast of Falluja. It was, I was told, the largest enemy action in the area in the last eight months.

This was my second visit to Al Anbar, a hotbed of enemy activity that stretches out west of Baghdad all the way to the Syrian and Jordanian borders. It's almost entirely Sunni and was heavily Baathist before Saddam's overthrow, and it's also the pipeline into Iraq for jihadists from the rest of the Islamic world. When I was in Camp Falluja a year ago for about a week, I heard no outgoing fire, and there was no incoming fire. Ramadi, the reputed headquarters of al Qaeda in Iraq, remained wracked with violence, but Falluja was a tame pussycat.

Now it has sprouted long nails and sharp teeth. Before I left the city and its environs, I would hear outgoing artillery on all three nights I spent time at Camp Falluja, withstand a mortar attack on one of the small outposts I stayed at, and hear more firefights in the distance, either from the outposts or out on patrol, than I could count.

Did we seize Falluja in November 2004 only to slowly cede it back to the enemy? And if so, what does it say about the "grab and hold" strategy underway to secure this huge Sunni province, without which the war cannot be won? Is the Iraqi Army (IA) that we are training up to the job? The answers are complex, and I often felt like each of the nine blind men grappling with the elephant—at one point feeling a trunk, at another the tail. But this is what I saw and heard.

Michael Fumento, a senior fellow at the Hudson Institute, last wrote for The Weekly Standard *about the avian flu.*

MiTTs and the IA

I rotated among three different battalions of the Iraqi First Division based out of Camp India, just east of Falluja. One was in Falluja proper, one in Karma, and one at Camp India itself. All comprise both Iraqi Army soldiers and Americans. The IA recruits come here fresh from basic training (formerly a scant three weeks, but now eight) for further instruction in tracking down, detaining, and killing the enemy. The enemy is known by several nicknames including "Ali Baba," "Wahhabi" (the strict form of Islam to which many of the terrorists adhere), "the bad guys," and "Mooj," for mujahedeen.

The Americans attached to the Iraqi First Division are from the 80th Division, an Army Reserve unit based in Richmond, Virginia. They are not combat support—that comes from Marines at Camp Falluja and various forward operating bases (or FOBs, which rhymes with "Rob") throughout the area. Rather, these soldiers form "Military Transition Teams," or MiTTs. They always accompany the IA on patrols and raids "outside the wire," as leaving the camp is called; their job is to transition the IA into an independent fighting force that eventually can operate with no American help. These MiTT units may have less than a dozen men in them, including a few Marines attached for extra firepower.

Normally, what the MiTTs are doing would be the job of the Army Special Forces, the vaunted Green Berets who performed so brilliantly in leading the Northern Alliance to victory in Afghanistan. But "we don't have enough SF to do what we're doing now, in the magnitude and at the pace we want to do this," explains Col. Thomas C. Greenwood. "We have over 50 adviser teams just in Al Anbar. You'd use up every Green Beret team in the world if you were to use just them." Greenwood, from the First Marine Expeditionary Force, is the assistant chief of staff for Marine advisers to all three branches of the Iraqi security forces: the army, the border forces, and the police.

Friendly Fire

How is the transition from U.S. forces to Iraqi Security Forces going in the Falluja area? Judging by the amount of hostile activity, it might

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seem not very well. It's unfair to say there's constant fighting in the area, but when you hear several firefights in a day, you know it's busy. On my second night in the area, at Second Battalion in Karma, I was enjoying a beautiful moonlit evening, watching the Iraqi soldiers excitedly prepare for the arrival of a captured suspect. Suddenly I heard the brat-brat-brat of machine gun fire perhaps two miles away. Then all hell broke loose out there. I listened for awhile, then went inside to find out what was happening. It wasn't good.

Seven insurgents had attacked a checkpoint at a vital bridge over the Euphrates that I would later visit. The IA were already jumpy from having three rocket propelled grenades (RPGs) fired at them earlier in the day, two of which hit the bridge. Now they were shooting back from both the bridge position and an upper floor of a building near the bridge where they had more soldiers stationed. At some point the insurgents slipped out, but in the meantime a Marine quick reaction force had arrived. The Marines, unfortunately, were unaware that there was an IA post on the bridge and took them under fire. The IA, paying no attention to the color of the Marine tracer rounds, assumed they were bad guys and fired back.

All photos by Michael Fumento

122-millimeter mortar round

The commander of the unit I was embedded with, Maj. William Rummel, worked his walkie-talkie furiously to get both sides to cease fire. He succeeded just in time. The Marines, he later told the Iraqis, were about to call in a helicopter gunship to spray the bridge and probably rocket the building. Although about 2,000 rounds had been fired off (300 Marine, 1,700 Iraqi), nobody was hurt. That's not particularly surprising. It's not like in the movies where it usually only takes one or two rounds to bring down a soldier. Unless a good sniper is at work, it takes a lot of bullets to kill a man.

The next day, on a two-hour foot patrol, we heard another firefight and saw flares go up and smoke rising, though buildings blocked our view. Shortly after, I went back to Camp Falluja to be handed over to another unit when our Humvee broke down. While we were waiting for it to be fixed, there was, again, the thumping of outgoing artillery.

Finally we got to Third Battalion at Camp India at 2 A.M. Exhausted, I fell asleep in seconds, only to be awakened by four large explosions that sounded awfully close. They were. The bad guys had hit us with 122-millimeter mortars, the largest size they normally use, and large they are (about 5 inches in diameter and a couple feet long). The shells flew over the tiny camp and landed just outside. It's perhaps telling that I had heard enough gunfire in the past few days that I just rolled over and went back to sleep.

More encouraging was the response to an attack on Observation Post 3, which I visited two days after the attack. Manned by about 80 IA and three Marines, OP3 was stealthily enveloped on three sides by about 50 to 80 enemy firing from buildings that were anywhere from several hundred yards away to practically across the street. They attacked with RPGs and numerous light machine guns. The IA had nothing more than a few light machine guns and their AK-47 automatic rifles. (Their commanders are adamant that they need heavier weapons, especially large-caliber machine guns, but for various reasons the U.S. military isn't ready to supply them yet.)

Normally, both IA and American forces can get air support—helicopters or fighter-bombers—within 20 minutes, assuming there's enough space between good guys and bad guys to prevent fratricide. Often there isn't. Further, in what may have been a coordinated attack, fighting was raging in Ramadi at the same time and tying down air support. So the IA and the Marines had to hold on for 45 minutes for relief, in a war in which many firefights are over in just a few minutes. Finally, Marine quick reaction units arrived from two different directions only to find themselves under fire. But now the Iraqis and Americans switched to the offensive and got helicopter support.

For 17 hours they pursued the enemy through the city, killing 18 and taking prisoners. One IA officer was killed, a lieutenant, along with five Iraqi soldiers. Interestingly, that death was a source of pride and encouragement to the IA, in that the lieutenant died a hero—barking out orders with his dying breath. What could have been an absolute disaster became, in this war of small actions and small arms, a stunning success.

Why the Increased Violence?

And yet it must be reiterated that a year ago this area was quiet. Is beating off enemy attacks somehow better than not having them at all? It wouldn't seem so unless you consider the major demographic changes during that time.

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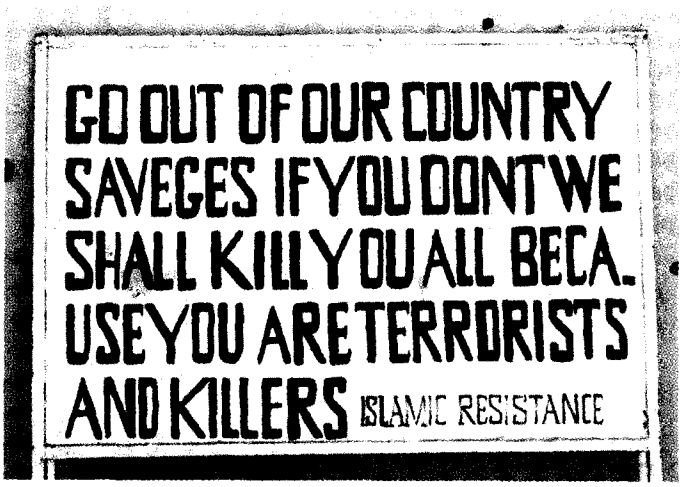
A year ago, residents had just started trickling back to their homes. Now the people have returned and, à la Mao Zedong's rules for guerrilla warfare, have become "the sea" in which the enemy can swim. Further, shortly after the Battle of Falluja in November 2004, U.S. troop strength in the area was somewhere north of 3,000 and was still high when I arrived in May 2005. Now it's down to about 300, with a few thousand IA and IP (Iraqi Police) filling the vacuum. (Exact numbers are confidential.)

The enemy will and do attack the Marines. At Second Battalion in Karma, the unit proudly displays a sign reading: "Go out of our country saveges [sic]. If you don't we shall kill you all because you are terrorists and killers." It's signed "Islamic Resistance." But clearly, around Falluja at least, they prefer Iraqi targets. Is that because the Iraqis are softer targets? Col. Greenwood says no. "I think the insurgents target the Iraqis not because they're lesser fighters; I think it's because they can have a huge psychological effect. Any small victory they score helps them. It puts a damper on recruiting and allows the local populace to see insurgents have strength." He also says the "increased spike in violence is an act of desperation," a last ditch effort to win before the coalition grows any stronger. But we've been hearing that "last ditch" stuff for the last couple of years, haven't we?

I don't doubt there's truth to what Greenwood says, but it remains the case that the enemy *needs* softer targets. I watched a video of an attack on a Falluja police station with a surrounding wall. The tape had fallen into coalition hands when the cameraman dropped his equipment and ran. The "actors" in the film were no more competent. One fired an RPG while running, making the odds of hitting the target slightly less than zero. Another was too scared to take the safety off his RPG and just stood there looking like an idiot. Another fired his light machine gun at a wall directly in front of him, while yet another kept tripping over the ammo belt that dangled from his machine gun and dragged on the ground. Others would simply hold their weapons above their head and fire over the wall. Yet they appeared to be taking almost no return fire from the police. They could have safely aimed their weapons, but made no effort to do so. All they got for their efforts was that most were captured after being identified from the film.

It also remains true that the IP and IA *provide* softer targets; they are not yet up to the job of defeating these Keystone Kop "warriors."

The police are still woefully undertrained and undermanned; they spend all too much time sitting in their reinforced stations and often require protection themselves. Infiltration also remains a problem, and there have been local reports of the police showing up at a firefight and for some reason the enemy won't shoot at them. In other words, apparently they've cut a deal: "You leave us alone; we'll leave you alone."



An Iraqi warning to foreign insurgents

The IA are clearly superior to the IP in terms of ability and weapons, yet the "jundi" (pronounced "joondee"), as the IA like to be called (although strictly speaking it refers to the low rank of private), simply lack the aggressiveness of American troops. While reports of individuals taking to their heels during a firefight are rare, the IA often seem to think that merely breaking off an enemy attack is the equivalent of victory.

I sat in an office with several IA who were in Saddam's so-called "special forces" and with Maj. Rummel, as he displayed the patience of Job in repeatedly emphasizing the need to go after and kill the enemy. There was lots of nodding, but I saw no evidence he got his point across. I also questioned the IA commander at OP3 on this during an interview, asking more than once if he was ready to send his men out to kill rather than merely defend. He simply evaded my questions, although he did say there was a value in grabbing prisoners.

In addition to lack of aggressiveness, the IA seem incapable of exercising fire control. Even without being able to distinguish the sound of an American weapon from an Iraqi one, you can often tell the difference in an instant. The well-drilled Americans fire off short bursts; Iraqis just pull that trigger and hold it. This makes it almost impossible to aim. Guns pull up as you fire them, and before you know it you're shooting at the clouds. It also wastes vast amounts of ammunition. (This is why, in the modern versions of the venerable M-16 rifle and its shorter M-4 counterpart, "full automatic" mode is mechanically limited to three-round bursts.)

On patrol with the IA in Falluja, they repeatedly

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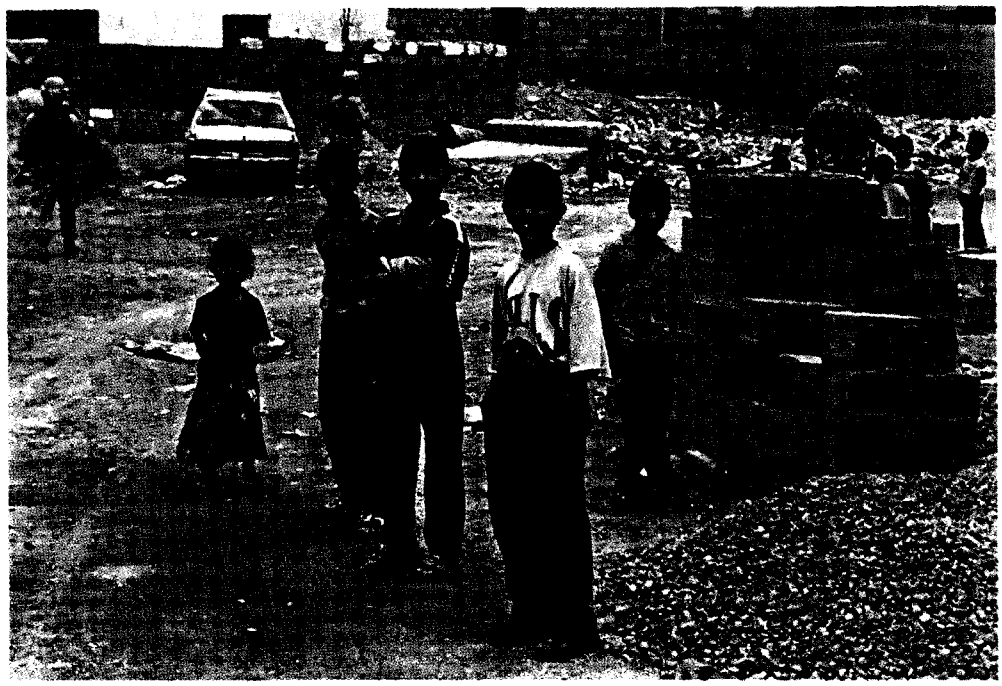
needed to be urged to fully perform their jobs, such as stopping suspicious cars and interrogating the passengers. (In Ramadi, where every daytime patrol is a matter of life and death, the IA performed considerably better and more autonomously.)

Everyone understands that the IA will never be up to the level of American soldiers. On the other hand, judging by the even more woeful performance of the enemy, they'll hardly have to be. Further, there's absolutely no evidence the insurgency is growing, while the IP and IA in Falluja clearly are. In Al Anbar, as well as in Iraq as a whole, while it's common to hear that time is on the side of the enemy, it's really not.



On patrol in Nasser Wa Salaam

"We only have about 3,000 IP now," says Greenwood, "but we expect to break the 10,000 point by next fall. They go to a police academy, we train them, give them gear, and give them leadership." Further, "we have about 18,000 Iraqi soldiers in Al Anbar and had only half of that last year." Nevertheless, Greenwood and others told me, it's the Iraqi Police that will really make the difference. Just as the Marines are turning larger and larger swaths of Falluja over to the Iraqi Army, the IA will one day have to start turning those areas over to the police. "A big challenge is building the Iraqi Army, but that's not a permanent solution," says Greenwood. "Once the police network is up and operating, it's the swan song for insurgents."

Hearts, Minds, and High-Fives

What about the "hearts and minds" aspect of the war? There was no place we patrolled where we didn't at least collect prodigious amounts of smiles and greetings from both children and adults. A recon patrol through a Falluja neighborhood known as Nasser Wa Salaam was instructive. Nasser Wa Salaam is like Sadr City in Baghdad—a ghetto into which Saddam herded the Shiites. But after decades of intermarriage, it's now about 60/40 Shiite/Sunni. It's basically an open-air toilet, with sewage collecting in large puddles. Fortunately for the residents, they don't seem to know how poor they are, and when we came through they were all smiles.

Street urchins followed us around in packs, initially begging for "Choccolata" and money. "U.S. number one! George Bush number one! Choccolata?" On safer patrols, we might carry and hand out candy, but not on this one. We couldn't afford distractions; an ace sniper was operating in the area. He'd already plugged several Marines, including one who was shot while lying prone, the best defensive position if you're caught in the open—an incredible shot. "The round went into his neck and tore a path right into his lungs," a Marine told me, perhaps providing more of a forensics report than I needed.

So this time we told the kids, "No choccolata!" but they didn't seem to care. They wanted high-fives, handshakes, head rubs, and conversation, notwithstanding that we barely knew anything they said. When I told them I was a reporter—"*Izmi sahafi*"—they kept demanding I take their photos. So I'd pretend, and they'd be delighted.

That was the happy side. On another patrol in an overwhelmingly Shiite section near Falluja's main market, I saw barriers placed across lesser streets. They might be rocks, large concrete pipes, or even just piles of trash. I asked about them. These people were exceptionally friendly to us, so clearly the barricades weren't intended for Americans or IA. "They're terrified of the insurgents," a soldier told me. The insurgents are lazy and don't like to walk, so usually stopping their cars

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stops them. In any case, it prevents drive-by shootings.

But civilians are fair game for shootings, bombings, and intimidation. New structures such as schools and hospitals are regularly targeted by mortar and rocket attacks. Cell phone towers are blasted so that civilians can't call in tips to American and Iraqi forces. In Ramadi, the bad guys waited until a hospital was 95 percent completed and then blew it up. Nobody had the heart to start over. As Col. Greenwood explains it, there are four phases to defeating the enemy. "You need security, then stability, then reconstruction, and finally prosperity in that order," he says. "We're still somewhat between the first and second. The insurgent knows if he can keep us from devoting resources to the last two, ultimately you can't win over the people—you're just using their neighborhoods as a battleground."

Throughout much of the country, not just in Al Anbar, ambitious American programs of electrification and building are often crippled, in part by attacks, but mostly by fear of attacks, causing inordinate expenditures on security. A couple of insurgents with a couple of mortar rounds that widely miss their mark can nonetheless scare off construction crews. That was a tactic used to try to prevent the building of Camp India.

No "choccolata," but the kids don't care

"Insurgents would fire mortars into the camp and invariably a sizable number [of workers] wouldn't return the next day," Third Battalion commander Lt. Col. Doug Anderson told me. "They'd filter back, but you had significant delays as a result. The Iraqis went after one mortar team [with a patrol] and got it. That slowed the attacks. But workers died, workers were wounded, Iraqi soldiers were wounded." Nevertheless, said Anderson, "this camp was going to be built no matter what the insurgency wanted."

Ultimately the war isn't going to be decided just by killing lots of bad guys, as important (and satisfying) as that can be. Guerrilla conflicts are political, and the best Iraqi commanders know that. One of them is the commander of First Division, who has so many names he simply goes by "General Abdullah." Iraqi commanders tend to talk in circles—one was a bigger gas bag than the *Hindenburg*—but Abdullah is relatively straightforward.

He complains that he's outgunned by the bad guys. "My soldiers only have AKs and PKCs [light machine guns, essentially an AK-47 with extra kick], and my soldiers ask me why the Army has no heavy machine guns." But he's delighted that his sector has recently been enlarged. "The men are proud that the Marines trust us to give us more space. We have informers, and because we have good relationships with people, we can do stuff the Marines can't. But we can share information with Marines as well."

And he acknowledges that his troops can't do it all. He believes the linchpin is a strong government. "The more the people trust the government, the easier my job becomes," he says. Or as Greenwood puts it, "I think we're making progress, but what the American people have to understand is that insurgency is essentially a political contest between both sides competing for the popular will."

From Falluja all the way west to the Syrian border, Abdullah acknowledges, there is much sympathy for the enemy and many hiding places, including farms and caves. "When there is a political solution with them," he says, "they will help stop the foreign guys."

It won't be easy, but if it can be accomplished in Al Anbar it can be done anywhere. Says Greenwood, "One high-ranking Iraqi officer told me 'Al Anbar is worse than the devil!'" But Greenwood disarmed him. "I said with your help, we're going to make it too nice for the devil to visit." ♦

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Why Wang Wenyi Was Shouting

Is Beijing committing unspeakable atrocities against the Falun Gong movement?

By Ethan Gutmann

Wang Wenyi, the woman whose shouts disrupted the welcoming ceremony for Chinese president Hu Jintao on the White House lawn on April 20, is a middle-aged pathologist and a follower of Falun Gong. That spiritual movement was outlawed in China in 1999, and since then Falun Gong has become a focal point for opposition to the Communist party. To that extent, Wang's outburst was understandable. Less obvious was the connection between her profession and the raw intensity of her denunciation of "killing" by Hu's China.

As a doctor and a Falun Gong practitioner, Wang had to be incensed by a hair-raising story coming out of northeast China—of organ harvesting from live Falun Gong prisoners. The reports, which first appeared in print in the March 10 edition of the Falun Gong-associated publication *Epoch Times*, are still sketchy and confirmation scarce. Yet the allegations are just credible enough to demand attention—too serious to be ignored unless proven false. What's more, recent work by the World Organization to Investigate the Persecution of Falun Gong, headquartered in Boston, has turned up some compelling corroboration. Here, then, is the narrative as it has emerged so far.

Back in 1988, a hospital was constructed on a 21,087-square meter plot (about five acres) a few miles outside of Shenyang, in a satellite city called Sujiatun. It's pronounced Soo-jah-tyun, and you might want get to know that name.

It happened that the hospital—now the Liaoning Provincial Thrombosis Hospital of Integrated Chinese and Western Medicine—had a large basement and an inconspicuous back door. In 2001, some employees in the hospital's accounting and logistics department noticed that the hospital's requests for food, rubber gloves, toilet paper, and surgical equipment suddenly went way, way up. The food and surgical tools would disappear, the trash would get hauled away, yet it was unclear how they were being used. At one point in 2002, the accounting department estimated the logistical increase represented a whopping discrepancy of thousands of patients.

One accountant—called Annie in the Falun Gong literature on the scandal—was aware of the supply mystery, but what concerned her far more was the behavior of her husband, a surgeon at Sujiatun. On the surface, the couple was doing fine. He was bringing home increasingly large amounts of cash, and his job appeared secure. The hospital had even issued him a dedicated cell-phone, which would ring at odd hours and send him back to Sujiatun. Yet when he came home to bed, he had violent nightmares and would wake bathed in sweat. During the day, he was constantly on edge, preoccupied, even fearful of his wife's touch.

It took a year, but eventually he confessed to her: The accounting staff was right. There were extra "patients" in the subterranean depths of the hospital, and some makeshift operating rooms down there, too. When his cell phone rang, it meant that a "patient" had been wheeled in and given a small dose of anesthesia (the hospital had a limited supply). Then he and the other doctors—some hired from the outside, each with a specialty, all constantly on call—would come in and remove the patient's kidneys, skin tissue, corneas, and other organs, seemingly to order. The remains of the "patient" would then be carried down to the old boiler, which doubled as an incinerator. The workers who dis-

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posed of the bodies—sometimes still alive—helped themselves to the occasional watch, necklace, or ring as a kind of tip.

The "patients"—men and women, old and young—were all Falun Gong practitioners. It was so much easier that way—no arrest warrants, no need for paper work. If a diagnosis had to be stipulated for some reason, the entry read "mentally destroyed," and the cause of death "suicide." The doctors' silence was bought with generous financial rewards, the assurance that they were simply "cleansing" for the party, and the vague threat implicit in the observation that if you had already done some of these operations then what difference would a few more make? Buck up!

The hospital is still operating, but the Falun Gong "patients" are apparently gone. The Chinese Communist party denies, of course, that they ever were there. More interesting, a recent U.S. consular visit found no cause for concern.

The first account of the horrors at Sujiatun was provided by a Chinese reporter now in hiding in the United States, with whom I spoke briefly. He claims to have many sources, some of whom he paid, as is common in China.

As for Annie, I interviewed her for ten minutes on April 20, after her first, rather chaotic, public appearance. She spoke at a rally at McPherson Square, a few blocks from the White House, to protest human rights abuses in China. Although our interview was hardly the six-hour session that I wanted, we were alone, apart from an interpreter, and could look each other in the eye. My strong impression was not of a Falun Gong devotee put up to a stunt, but of a classic accidental witness: pale, open-eyed, conscientious, and somewhat bewildered by Washington—a beautiful doctor's wife sitting in the back of a van, telling the most explosive story in recent Chinese history.

My strong impression was not of a Falun Gong devotee put up to a stunt, but of a classic accidental witness: pale, open-eyed, conscientious.

It must be noted that there are discrepancies between the Chinese reporter's account and Annie's. For example, he called Sujiatun a concentration camp at one point and spoke darkly of barbed wire and massive underground civil defense tunnels allegedly connected to the hospital. Annie portrayed Sujiatun as a regular hospital with a basement large enough to hold thousands of Falun Gong prisoners.

The U.S. State Department states that its "officers were allowed to tour the entire facility and grounds and found no evidence that the site is being used for any function other than as a normal public hospital." And for those who point out that you couldn't clean up Auschwitz in three weeks—the time that elapsed between the publication of the story and the consular visit—the matter ends there.

But, given the political sensitivities involved, particularly during a summit, I still have questions. Anyone who has lived in China knows that three weeks is a long time by Chinese construction standards. Is the State Department certain its officers toured an unaltered facility? Did they take an architect with them? Collect forensic samples? Sift through ashes? Interview any hospital personnel privately, off-site? And on their tour, did they reject the company of the inevitable CCP handler or hospital operative? If the answer to these questions is no, then the Americans' findings are interesting but hardly dispositive. The visitors could easily have missed a walled-off underground facility.

Experts have also pointed out that the Sujiatun hospital is prohibited by its legal classification from performing organ transplants in the first place. Yet Annie spoke of organ harvesting, not transplants. In any case, in the new entrepreneurial China, organ transplants at hospitals of a similar classification have been reported on Chinese state-controlled television, apparently without repercussions.

These are all legitimate areas for inquiry—which is difficult in surveillance-rich China. Certainly, investigating Sujiatun would place any Beijing-based media bureau on a collision course with the CCP. No wonder Sujiatun has so far been covered in depth only by the *Epoch Times*, the same paper that acquired a press pass for Wang Wenyi. It has numerous Falun Gong practitioners on its staff and has become a magnet for Chinese dissidents of many stripes. Like the Jewish papers that published the first accounts of the Holocaust, the *Epoch Times* and the World Organization to Investigate the Persecution of Falun Gong have made this story their own.

Over the last month, Kevin Yang, a director of the latter group, has led a team making phone calls to hospitals in Tianjin, Shanghai, Shandong Province, and elsewhere in China posing as transplant candidates searching for organs. They made some 80 phone calls, and struck pay dirt at seven different hospitals. Recordings of the incriminating conversations were played for the press on April 18. They would be hard to script. Here are highlights from two of the phone conversations, translated by Yang's team:

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Zhongshan Hospital, affiliated with Fudan University in Shanghai, March 16, 2006:
Q: I have to have a fresh and healthy kidney. And it should be alive. You are not going to give me a kidney from a dead person, are you?
A: Of course we will give you a good kidney, how could we give you a bad one?
Q: . . . Do you have ones from people who practice Falun Gong? I heard that they provide very good ones.
A: All that we have here are of this type.

Tongji Hospital, Wuhan, March 30, 2006:
Q: . . . Do live transplants, for example, use organs from live people who practice Falun Gong?
A: Sure.
Q: At your place, for example, prisoners, like those who practice Falun Gong, can you guarantee enough live supplies from such people?
A: Yes, sure! When it's convenient for you, come over and discuss the details.

Now, given that many Chinese are consummate salesmen, could some of the responses be construed as simply attempts to please the customer? Perhaps. But the calls also turned up an unexpected timeline. Repeatedly, hospital representatives urged the potential customers to come in April when supplies would be plentiful, and got nervous when customers asked about May. Independently, unnamed sources in China have told the *Epoch Times* that after its story appeared on March 10, party authorities gave the hospitals until May 1 to end the practice (or at least make it untraceable).

Finally, Yang's team also placed a call to the workers in the boiler room of the Sujiatun hospital. The call confirmed that they burned bodies and had watches to sell.

If it is true that imprisoned practitioners of Falun Gong are being murdered for their organs in China, a remaining question is the scale of the practice. The number of Falun Gong practitioners in custody is disputed; estimates by the Chinese dissident community range from 235,000 to one million or more. An unnamed military doctor from the mainland told *Epoch Times* that Sujiatun is one of 36 such facilities, created following the directive of Liu Jing, China's former deputy minister of public security, to "stamp out" Falun Gong "before the Olympic Games in 2008." And for several years now, rumors have circulated on the mainland of a death camp in Xinjiang capable of holding 50,000 Falun Gong practitioners.

Personally, I fear the worst. One reason is that the Chinese authorities have always handled Falun Gong with a peculiar vehemence, even in comparison with other enemies of the CCP. When Falun Gong was declared illegal on July 21, 1999, ancient sound trucks drove around Beijing to make sure that no one missed the point. That's unusual. At the time, I was working in Chinese television, and I remember the day well. Several of my Chinese colleagues began laughing nervously and buried their faces in their hands, muttering that they had not seen such a thing since the Cultural Revolution. Since then, Falun Gong participants have regularly disappeared, with no arrest record, nothing but an assigned number, leaving them particularly vulnerable.

But the main reason I'm pessimistic is the money. Organ transplants are a profitable business. Until recently, a website out of Shenyang carried a price list for organ transplant operations in English to attract foreign customers, with a kidney transplant going for $62,000. And there is precedent; it is indisputable that the Chinese Communist party has sanctioned the sale of body parts from executed prisoners. As a former Beijing business consultant, I am familiar with the peculiar combination of state directive and entrepreneurial acumen pervasive in the New China. A directive comes from on high. The money is made down below. If the CCP orders tracking software, say, installed in Internet cafés across China, the local police will sell a version for $200 a pop, and every café had better purchase a copy. The May 1 shutdown will also be familiar to anyone who follows micropatterns of counterfeit enforcement in China. Chinese SWAT teams do not swoop down on illicit factories, even the ones that make fake Johnson & Johnson baby oil that causes skin rashes. Instead, plant managers are told to finish up their production runs and move their equipment elsewhere.

So I suspect that the profits from Chinese organ harvesting dwarf those of the Nazis' soap and hair-pillow-stuffing enterprises—but I also wonder whether they will prove the undoing of the CCP. Where there is money, there's a trail. *Epoch Times*, in a rush to get the story out, neglected to pursue that line of investigation. What if its reporters had formed a front company that had gone in and inspected the stock of potential organ donors—wired-up, spy-cam, the works—and only then released the statements of witnesses like Annie for corroboration and color? What if they had persuaded Congress to order U.S. intelligence agencies to intercept financial transaction statements and monitor train and truck movements to and from the hospitals of China?

No matter—that's not how *Epoch Times* handled it, because that's not the way real witnesses behave. Instead, when they are ready to come forward, they feel compelled to testify. And it's not the way real people behave, either, when they believe that family, friends, and fellow congregants are being thrown into incinerators and when they see their own honorable profession grotesquely perverted. Instead, they scream bloody murder—just as Wang Wenyi did—and silently pray that someone is listening. ♦

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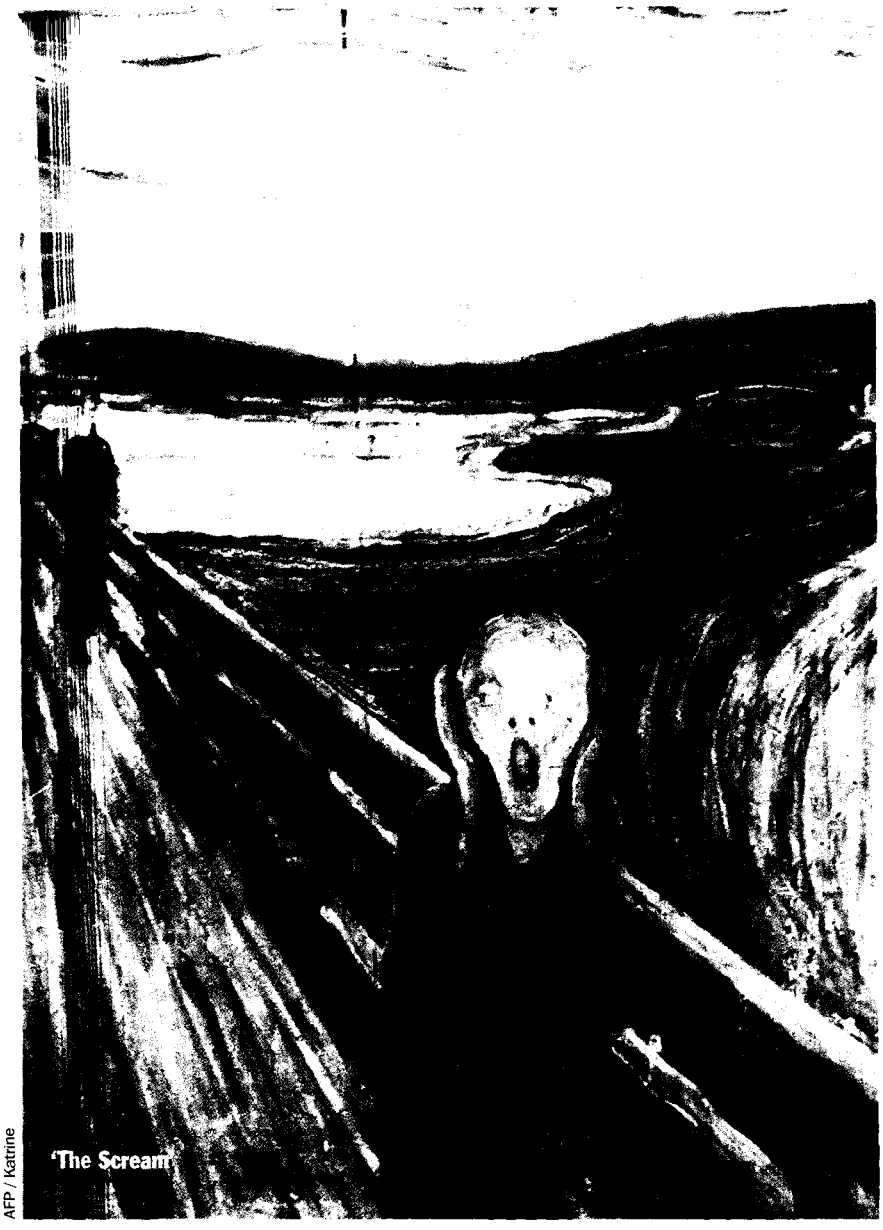
Artist of Anxiety

Why Edvard Munch speaks to us moderns

BY LAWRENCE KLEPP



'The Scream'

AFP / Katrine

Edvard Munch's long life neatly measures Franz Kafka's short life. He was born in 1863, 20 years before Kafka, and died in 1944, 20 years after Kafka's death. They never met, but they have some things in common. Both grew up in provincial European cities, where they worked out an expressionist, visionary, dreamlike art pretty much on their own. W.H. Auden once wrote that Kafka stands to our age as Dante did to the Late Middle Ages, our age being, as Auden elsewhere christened it, the Age of Anxiety. If Kafka offered the literary emblems of our unease, Munch supplied the iconic painting, *The Scream*, which may be the most famous, the most reproduced, and the most parodied image in all of modern art.

The undulating spook with his hands to the sides of his head as the vertiginous fjord landscape behind him convulses under a blood-red sky didn't go over well at first in Munch's native Norway, where the press had nicknamed the artist "Bizzarro," or in Berlin, where the government closed down his first exhibition after a storm of public and critical outrage, or in Paris, where a critic summed up his paintings and their color schemes as "cancerous scribbles thrown up by a morbid imagination . . . violets that violate public order . . . police station blues . . . homicidal oranges . . . pharmaceutical reds. . . . "

Today you can get *The Scream* on T-shirts and coffee mugs and greeting cards.

Edvard Munch
Behind the Scream
by Sue Prideaux
Yale, 391 pp., $35

Munch and Kafka were outstanding, tremulous, conflicted introverts who, uninterested in politics and at once skeptical and cryptically devout in religion, were dealing with their own inner demons in their work. But they ended up channeling, if not exactly the spirit of the age, at least the spirit of the age's bad dreams, many of which came true. Munch painted *The Scream* in 1892. Thanks to Freud and company and the history of the 20th century, we have learned a lot more about anxiety since then, and it seems to be what Munch already knew.

He acquired his demons the old-fashioned way, through his family: "Illness, insanity, and death are the dark angels who watched over my cradle and have accompanied me throughout my life," he wrote. Sue Prideaux's new biography makes it clear just how grim and fateful it all was, as if a half-dozen ominous Ibsen and Strindberg plays and a Bergman film or two had been condensed into one *angst*-packed Scandinavian script. But the effect isn't depressing. Munch overcame formidable odds to become a

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great artist (the only Scandinavian painter with a world reputation), and as a stoical loner, enigmatic, hard-drinking, prone to use his fists, with the blond good looks of a Viking hero and a series of beautiful, unstable women in his life, he's the kind of property Hollywood might go for (though it might result in something like *Lust for Life*). The only movie about him, however, seems to be Peter Watkins's intelligent but overly long, fragmented, and didactic *Edvard Munch* (1974), originally made for Norwegian television.

His mother died of tuberculosis when he was five, and his sister Sophie, a year older, talented at drawing like him, and his closest friend, died of it when she was 15. This became the crucial event of his early life, returned to again and again in paintings like *The Sick Child* (1886), *Death in the Sickroom* (1893), and *The Deathbed* (1895). His father, Christian Munch, retreated into religious obsession. He can be seen, a white-bearded man anxiously praying, in several of the paintings.

The Munchs were a distinguished patrician family that included army officers, scholars, and clergymen, plus a conventional early 19th-century painter named Andreas Munch; but Christian was an unworldly, Dostoevsky-reading doctor, and the family had to keep moving from cheap lodgings to cheaper lodgings in Christiana (now Oslo). Another of Edvard's sisters, Laura, went from lively to erratic to mad and finally had to be sent to an institution, and his seemingly healthy younger brother Andreas died suddenly. Edvard, ill for long periods of childhood and adolescence, assumed there was an excellent chance that he, too, would die young or go mad, and he came pretty close to each.

Sophie's death brought about the end of his childhood religious faith. That began a series of clashes with his father, who reacted to his announced intention of becoming an artist by saying it would be like going to live in a brothel, which turned out to be fairly accurate. Edvard was soon drawn into the small but provocative bohemia that was just getting started in Christiana, and he later frequented similar groups, not to mention brothels, in Paris and Berlin. The bohemias of Europe in the 1880s and '90s were no longer threadbare romantic Rudolfo-and-Mimi affairs. They were the beginning of modern bohemianism and modernist art, filled with talk of free love, anarchism, Darwin, Nietzsche, and absinthe.

Munch drank as heavily as the others but was an aloof, inscrutable presence at their argumentative gatherings, saying little except for occasional paradoxical, darkly humorous remarks, then disappearing to work. This, along with a certain naive and innocent aura, made him mysterious and attractive to the free-spirited women in attendance, some of them (including his first mistress) adventurous married society ladies.

Munch's affairs were almost always stormy, and his paintings and superb graphic works had their other great theme. His girlfriends figure strikingly in many of them (*Madonna*, *The Day After*, *Salome*, *Dance of Life*, and others), and his own desperation fills the others. (*The Scream* was intended to be part of a *Frieze of Life*, an eros-and-its-discontents series that included *The Kiss*, *Vampire*, *Jealousy*, etc.). One of his mistresses, Tulla Larsen, a Norwegian heiress, stalked him across Europe, determined to marry him or else make his life miserable, succeeding in the latter. After he refused to see her, she got him to rush over by pretending to be on the brink of suicide. There was a struggle for a gun and it went off, blowing away part of a finger on his left (nonpainting) hand. Another beautiful girlfriend in his paintings, Dagny Juel, was later the victim in a murder-suicide in Warsaw. Many of his paintings mirror the *femme fatale* theme common in *fin-de-siècle* art and literature. He wasn't a misogynist, but he seems to have come to the conclusion that women, or at least his razor's-edge relationships with them, were a threat to his work. He never married.

When he was coming of age in the early 1880s, the debate in European art circles was between Realism and Impressionism. He wasn't much interested in either. The Impressionists, he thought, were peddling "soap art" (referring to the Golden Age artwork on contemporary soap boxes), an updated paradise myth. He wanted "soul art," closely examining inner life the way Leonardo had studied anatomy. By the time of his first extended stay in Paris (1889-90), he would write, "We shall paint no more interiors with men reading or women knitting. They must be living beings who breathe, feel, suffer, and love. I shall paint a series of such paintings, and people will realize their religious nature and remove their hats before them, just as they do in church."

In Paris, thanks to the craze known as *Japonisme*, Japanese prints were everywhere, and along with his first glimpses of Van Gogh, Gauguin, and the Belgian Symbolist James Ensor, they were catalysts for the style of *The Scream* and his other best-known works, with their strong, sinuous, flowing lines, contrasting vivid or lurid colors, and flattened or compressed space. Munch, a formidable reader of literature, philosophy, and science, was a good, searching writer as well, and his diaries and a document known as the "St. Cloud Manifesto," written in the Paris suburb, reveal a kind of mystical faith, half-Nietzschean, half-pantheist, a belief that everything that exists, including works of art and the colors that compose them, has its own life, its own imperishable soul. It saved him, according to Prideaux, from the suicidal nihilism of some of his bohemian cohorts.

Munch's self-imposed exile from Norway entailed almost two decades of scrounging and wandering, but it was a spiritual necessity. The constant attacks in the press made it hard for him to live there and even harder to sell his paintings. Like his countrymen Henrik Ibsen and the novelist Knut Hamsun (both of whom he knew), Munch eventually made a living in Norway only because of his popularity in Germany. When his first exhibit in Berlin was shut down, fights broke out in the artists' association, and the younger artists, supported by a few dis-

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senting critics, formed the Berlin Succession. Munch was seen as leading the way to a new Expressionist art. He became a regular in the drunken and contentious Berlin bohemian group known as the Black Piglet, after the café it frequented, where he got to know August Strindberg and other expatriate Scandinavians, but he eventually began referring to his bohemian companions as "the fiends," wanting to avoid their penchant for occultism and trouble.

By 1908, he had developed a persecution mania about them, fueled by quarrels, fistfights, and his own heavy drinking, and he landed in a Copenhagen clinic. After that, he drank much less, his art became less brooding and introspective, and he settled in Norway, buying a farmhouse outside Oslo with the money he was getting from rich, liberal-minded Germans like Max Linde and Walter Rathenau (who was later assassinated, as the Weimar Republic foreign minister, by anti-Semitic nationalists). His portraits of them and their children are, along with his many self-portraits, among his best works.

Despite some official honors and public commissions, Munch was never completely accepted in Norway during his lifetime. ("The wounds from Norway have made life a kind of hell for me," he wrote.) During and after World War I, when Norwegian sentiment was pro-British, he was known as "the German" because of his German patrons, and as the papers kept up their attacks on him, vandals shot one of his dogs and broke the windows of his house.

In fact, he felt nothing but horror for the war and its aftermath in Germany, going there to join the demonstrations protesting Rathenau's murder. When Hitler came to power, Munch helped many German friends and artists flee, and his paintings were confiscated and included in the "Degenerate Art" exhibition of 1937. After the Nazis occupied Norway in 1940, he refused to have anything to do with them and was under constant threat of arrest.

He's now a national hero. The huge number of paintings and drawings that filled and overflowed his house (he hated to part with them, often making copies of ones he sold, and called them "my children") became the basis for the Munch Museum in Oslo.

Prideaux's is not a critical biography in the sense of evaluating individual paintings as art and determining their rank in his *oeuvre*. She doesn't write as an art critic, and given the variety of styles and achievements (even within the same period) in Munch's work, and the contrast between what preceded and followed his 1908 breakdown, readers will have to draw their own conclusions. But what she does is something better, a masterful job of integrating the work with the tumultuous early and quiet late life, through its autobiographical themes and its population of Munch's family, friends, and lovers. She's also good on the cultural and historical context. I caught only one minor mistake: Her rendering of Max Nordau, author of a scathing 1890s antimodernist tract called *Degeneration*, as "Nordenau."

This is the book to get—generously illustrated with compelling photographs and reproductions of the art—if you're entranced by the way Munch made haunting, melancholy beauty and a modern icon out of his personal anxieties. Sue Prideaux solves the puzzles in the pictures while leaving their essential mystery intact. ♦

Stranger Than Fiction

Where stories end, and truth begins, in William T. Vollmann. **BY JOHN WILSON**

Confounding the literary prognosticators, William T. Vollmann's *Europe Central*, a massive volume of linked stories shifting between Germany and Russia in the period from 1914 to 1975, won the National Book Award for fiction, beating out E.L. Doctorow's *The March*, among other competitors on the shortlist.

Europe Central
by William T. Vollmann
Viking, 832 pp., $39.95

At 46, Vollmann has published a formidable stack of books, but chances are you haven't read him, unless you happened on one of the dispatches he's filed over the past 15 years or so for magazines such as *Esquire*, *Gear*, and *Spin*, on the war in Bosnia, Pol Pot and his henchmen, the Thai sex trade, and so on. Writing journalism to pay the bills while producing a steady stream of novels and other fictions, Vollmann was also at work on an encyclopedic study of violence and the justifications thereof, an unclassifiable blend of reportage, rumination, and autodidactic moral philosophy, copiously illustrated with his own photographs from trouble spots around the globe and published in seven volumes in 2003 under the title *Rising Up and Rising Down*. For all its flaws, this treatise is worthy of greater respect than many an accredited volume issued with the imprimatur of our finest university presses.

If faced with a choice between *Rising Up and Rising Down* and John Rawls and his epigones, I'd take Vollmann every time. A one-volume abridgment was published last year.

But it's on his fiction that Vollmann's principal claim to our attention rests. There, too, he works on a

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huge canvas. He was still in his twenties when he conceived a "symbolic history" of North America called *Seven Dreams*, a projected series of seven novels, four of which have appeared, beginning in 1990 with *The Ice-Shirt* (1990). A tale of the Norse Greenlanders, culminating with their violent encounter with the natives of North America, it features Vollmann's own illustrations (self-consciously amateurish, playful, something like garage rock) and an elaborate, mock-archaic title page on which the author is identified as "William T. Vollmann (Known in This World as 'William the Blind')," a conceit which subsequent volumes in the series have maintained.

Vollmann himself pops up in the book now and then, visiting Greenland in the late 1980s, another recurring device in the series. And the novel comes with an extensive list of sources; for all his deliberate slouch, Vollmann is at home in archives, a bibliomaniac, an inhaler of print, and if he's going to depart from the historical record—as he does—he wants to be sure precisely when and how he is taking liberties.

I know that some people besides myself read *The Ice-Shirt*—it was reviewed, after all—but I've met only one other. So too with *Fathers and Crows* and *The Rifles* and *Argall*, the rest so far in *Seven Dreams*. Though his books have been praised, sometimes extravagantly, and his scabrous stories set among the brothels and drug dens of San Francisco have a cult following, there's no single novel of Vollmann's that you can confidently expect a reasonably enterprising fellow-reader to be acquainted with.

In part, that may be because he doesn't suit any ready-made constituency. There is a tragic cast to Vollmann's North American epic, but it's the tragedy that began in Eden. Unfashionably strenuous in pursuit of truth and justice, he's also a trickster. A writer of stunning ambition, he seems at times preemptively to ward off criticism by chasing potential readers away, at once self-indulgent and self-destructive. There's something of the perpetual adolescent about him, evident in his obsession with prostitutes, his alternating flights of grandiosity and self-deprecation, his bad-boy antics.

To my knowledge, he's the only writer interviewed by *The Paris Review* who has contrived, within the first page of conversation, to mention himself masturbating. (The act is recollected in tranquility, so to speak, and doesn't take place during the interview itself; reader, be thankful for small mercies.)

Viking / Ken Miller

William T. Vollmann

Will the National Book Award change anything? Not much, probably, though certainly the book deserves such recognition. In a prologue of sorts, the author seems to speak for a moment in his own voice, as he will briefly now and then in the course of the narrative: "So I apply myself now, on this dark winter's night, to invade the meaning of Europe." He manages to signal his awareness of his hubris without for a moment disowning the project.

It's a worthy ambition of a sort that Serious Readers—readers of that small company who think at all about Europe for purposes other than business or tourism—don't find risible if the author is, say, Tony Judt, who muses near the end of his recent *Postwar: A History of Europe Since 1945*, that "the twenty-first century might yet belong to Europe," or Mark Leonard, director of foreign policy at the Center for European Reform, whose *Why Europe Will Run the 21st Century* appeared in 2005 (and was shelved as nonfiction).

These are Serious Men. But a novelist? Who does he think he is, playing at this game? Let him do his job, tell a good story of a kind that might even aspire to be made into a movie.

Vollmann remains unrepentant. We need historians; we need policy analysts. Each branch of knowledge is indispensable. And so we also need fiction writers audacious enough to imagine the calamity which befell Europe and the world in the 20th century—a reality that isn't comprehended by talk of governments and "interests" and balances of power, however learned that talk, however necessary.

Europe Central is not a novel, exactly, or a collection of stories. Much of the book consists of pairs of chapters, one set in Germany (mostly in the Nazi era), the other set in Russia (mostly in the Soviet era), the two playing off each other. And then there are variants in which both chapters are set in the Soviet Union or both in Germany. Embedded in the book are a couple of longer episodes that could stand alone as novellas, and a thread of chapters that could be stitched together to form a novel centering on the Soviet composer Dmitri Shostakovich.

It's a book about World War II—with battlefield set pieces—and a book about living under a totalitarian regime, particularly about what it was like to be an artist in the era of Hitler and Stalin, with portraits of the artist Käthe Kollwitz, the poet Anna

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Akhmatova, and the Soviet documentary filmmaker Roman Karmen.

"Europe Central" is the heart of Europe, not simply a place but the core of a civilization that is infected by a kind of original sin shorn of its theological meaning. Not that Europe is the root of all evil (though in *Seven Dreams* Vollmann occasionally gives way to the temptation of idealizing the victims of the European conquest of North America). Rather, there's a specifically European trajectory of the universal human story of desire and striving and utter folly.

And so "Europe Central" is also a metaphorical telephone exchange evoked at the very beginning of Vollmann's narrative. Here the telephone is not merely a tool of human agency; it has taken on a life of its own, embodying the momentum of a society that will sleepwalk its way to an orgy of destruction, facilitated by the latest technological advances.

This is Vollmann's most controlled performance to date, his least willful book. Still, there are self-indulgences, most notably the character of Elena Konstantinovskaya, a translator with whom Shostakovich—the historical figure, that is, as opposed to Vollmann's fictional version—was (briefly) romantically involved in the mid-1930s and who was later married for a time to Roman Karmen. Vollmann chose, as he explains in an appendix that follows the more than 50 pages of source notes, to make her central to Shostakovich's life and imagination, a tragically mysterious, infinitely desirable woman who, moreover, somehow represents Europe. But this authorial fiat is entirely unmotivated, and Vollmann's portrait of Elena—seductive or silly, depending on your mood—has the atmosphere of a private fantasy.

Still, if you can forgive much from a writer in exchange for largeness of vision and language that has some of the magnificent excess of Shakespeare and Dickens, if you have read *Moby-Dick* more than once, you owe it to yourself to give Vollmann a try, and *Europe Central* is a good place to start. ♦

Natural Selection

Yet another reason to admire the author of 'The Origin of Species.' **BY JAMES SEATON**

According to conventional wisdom, the continuing battles over the teaching of evolution in the public schools are episodes in the larger culture war between the secularist left and the religious right.

Larry Arnhart has news for both sides. He argues that "conservatives need Charles Darwin" to make their case that there is such a thing as "human nature" as against the left's need to believe that "human nature" is only a social construction. Conservatism is suspicious of grand schemes of social transformation, since it recognizes that human nature cannot be radically altered. The left, on the other hand, needs to believe that human beings are infinitely malleable and thus ultimately perfectible to justify its quest for absolute equality.

Darwinian Conservatism
by Larry Arnhart
Imprint Academic, 162 pp., $17.90

As Arnhart puts it, "conservatives have a realist vision of human nature" while "those on the left have a utopian vision of human nature." He argues, convincingly, that Darwinian science supports the realist vision rather than utopian hopes. Arnhart points out, for example, that the Darwinian narrative explains why it is human nature to "feel more attachment to those close to us . . . than we do to strangers who are far away."

Of course, conservatives like Edmund Burke did not need Darwin in order to understand and celebrate the attachment of human beings to "the little platoon," and admirers of Darwin like Karl Marx and Peter Singer have not been deterred from doing their best to stifle such attachments, whether they, like Marx, call for world revolution or, like Singer, explain why it is unethical to care more about one's mother than about a stranger.

Arnhart's point, however, remains. Darwin, properly understood, provides support for the conservative "realist vision" rather than for the leftist "utopian vision." But neither Darwin's putative allies nor his adversaries have been willing to limit the debate to anything as straightforward as the implications of evolutionary theory for an understanding of human nature.

Religious opponents have assumed that evolutionary theory implies atheism, although *The Origin of Species* itself draws no such conclusion. But the proponents of evolution have been at least as eager as its adversaries to extend the significance of evolutionary theory far beyond Darwin's own claims. Ever since Darwin's masterpiece was published in 1859, promoters of a bewildering variety of social and political agenda and philosophies have enlisted—or hijacked—his ideas on behalf of their own.

At Karl Marx's gravesite, Friedrich Engels declared that "just as Darwin discovered the laws of evolution in organic nature so Marx discovered the law of evolution in human history." A few years later, John D. Rockefeller informed his Sunday School class that "the growth of a large business is merely a survival of the fittest. . . . The American Beauty rose can be produced in the splendor and fragrance which

James Seaton, professor of English at Michigan State, is writing a volume on Santayana for Yale University Press's Rethinking the Western Tradition *series.*

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bring cheer to its beholder only by sacrificing the early buds which grow up around it."

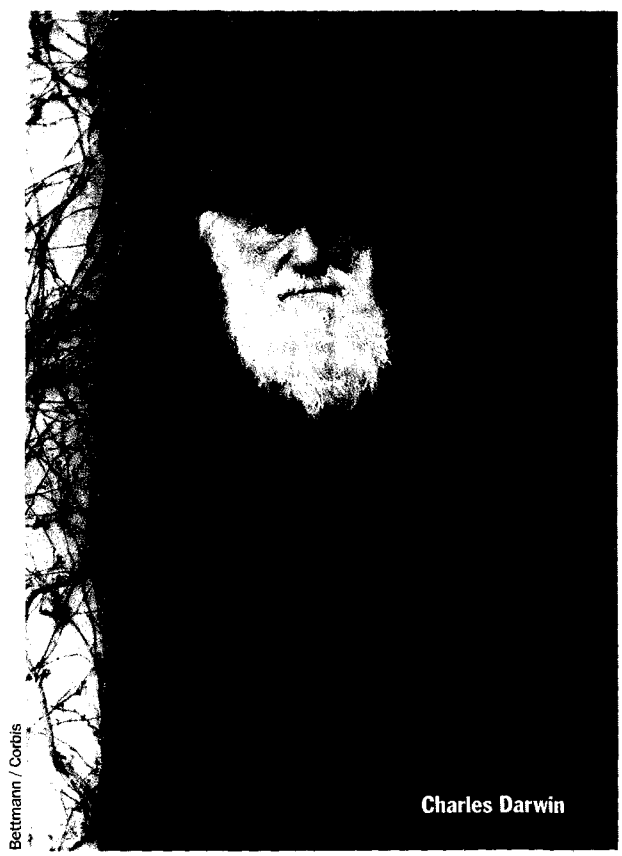
For Henri Bergson, Darwin's "natural selection" was clearly a process of "creative evolution" that revealed the centrality of a previously unrecognized force he called *elán vital*. John Dewey believed that the "intellectual transformation effected by the Darwinian logic" cleared the way for a new conception of philosophy as no longer a search for truth but "a method of moral and political diagnosis and prognosis." Today, Daniel Dennett argues that Darwin's "dangerous idea" successfully "unifies the realm of life, meaning and purpose with the realm of space and time, cause and effect, mechanism and physical law."

Although these figures disagree with each other, they are united in believing that difficult issues in a variety of fields outside the natural sciences can be definitively resolved by the application of scientific findings in one "hard" science or another—biology, in this case—to phenomena outside that science.

The influence of Darwinian evolutionary theory is perhaps greatest when unacknowledged and unrecognized; if "progressive" seems a more attractive political label than "liberal," surely at least part of the reason is the plausibility of the notion that social and political progress derives from the scientific prestige of Darwin's theory of biological evolution. Similarly, the contemporary popularity of cultural and political relativism is bolstered by the scientific prestige of Einstein's theory of relativity, as though somehow $e=mc^2$ had to do not with energy, mass, and the speed of light, but politics and morality.

Such attempts to make use of physics, chemistry, or biology to enforce radical conclusions about morality, politics, or metaphysics are, however, not science but scientism, which Merriam-Webster defines as "an exaggerated trust in the efficacy of the methods of natural science applied to all areas of investigation (as in philosophy, the social sciences, and the humanities)."

To his credit, Arnhart makes no attempt to formulate a new ideology or even to redefine conservatism on the basis of evolutionary biology. His book is not entitled *Conservative Darwinism* but *Darwinian Conservatism*. The adjective is not the enemy of the noun, he argues, since evolutionary biology merely confirms the view of human nature that has always been the basis of conservatism. Arnhart points out that "Darwinian science supports the conservative position by showing how marriage, family life, and sex differences conform to the biological nature of human beings as shaped by evolutionary history." Furthermore, "a Darwinian view of human nature sustains the conservative commitment to property as a natural propensity that is diversely expressed in custom and law."


Bettmann / Corbis

Charles Darwin

Although Arnhart successfully demonstrates that Darwinian theory undermines the leftist dream of a transformation of human nature through social engineering, he does assuage the fears of some Christians and other believers that Darwin also undermines belief in God, or at least the God of the Bible. Arnhart's acknowledgment that "Darwinian biology cannot confirm the supernatural truth of Biblical religion in its theological doctrines" is a considerable understatement, especially for those whose "theological doctrines" include the view of creation affirmed in Genesis. Believers in the Bible as literal truth are unlikely to be comforted by Arnhart's assurance that "Darwinian biology can confirm the natural truth of Biblical religion in its practical morality." And it is not only evangelicals and fundamentalists who might find aspects of Arnhart's version of Darwinism troubling. He informs the reader that "rhesus monkeys manifest despotic dominance" while "among chimpanzees, the dominant chimp often acts to protect subordinates, and if he becomes a bully, he can provoke an alliance of subordinates to throw him out of power."

Even after being made aware of this contrast between monkeys and chimps, however, those who think the aspiration for political freedom arises from a conviction that human beings are, as the Declaration of Independence puts it, "endowed by their Creator" with "unalienable rights" may be unsatisfied with Arnhart's willingness to account for humanity's "natural desire to be free from despotic exploitation" by observing that "in their style of political dominance, human beings are more like chimpanzees than rhesus monkeys."

On the whole, however, Arnhart succeeds in his limited goal of demon-

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strating that Darwinian theory, properly understood, supports conservative social and political ideas while discrediting leftist utopianism. The catch is, of course, the "properly understood" part. One lesson to be drawn from the long history of Social Darwinism and other such putatively scientific "isms"—one danger sign is a proper name prefixed to the "ism," *cf.* Marxism, Freudianism—is that it is a mistake to suppose that the natural sciences, including biology, provide clear and unmistakable evidence in support of any particular doctrines about politics, economics, morality, or metaphysics.

It is even more likely to be a mistake if the doctrine in question contradicts common sense. One would suppose that cultural conservatives, those who value the accumulated wisdom of the human cultural heritage, would be unlikely to make such a mistake. Conservatives worthy of the name should be among the last to reject conclusions about morality, politics, or the meaning of human life achieved by working through the findings of high culture and common sense in favor of new ideas based on Darwinian biology or, for that matter, any scientific theory at all, whether it is derived from biology, chemistry, or physics.

It is to Larry Arnhart's credit that, despite his own adherence to evolutionary theory, he does not call for such a rejection. Indeed, *Darwinian Conservatism* makes it clear that even the most wholehearted acceptance of Darwin's ideas does not require conservatives to reject either common sense or traditional morality. Addressing himself primarily to conservatives, Arnhart does not so much try to convince his readers that Darwinian biology is incontrovertibly true as to demonstrate that its findings, if true, strengthen the case for social and political conservatism.

He does this well, and accomplishes a more difficult task achieved by only the most accomplished scientists and thinkers: He makes connections between science and human life without succumbing to the temptations of scientism. ♦

Lapham in Wonderland

On the trail of the Beatles in search of enlightenment.

BY JUDY BACHRACH

Zuma Press / Keystone

The fab four (minus Ringo), Mia, the Maharishi, and Donovan

In the winter of 1968, Lewis Lapham was sent by the *Saturday Evening Post* to an ashram at the foothills of the Himalayas to examine the confluence of cultures: The Maharishi Mahesh Yogi, founder of the Transcendental Meditation movement, was about to boogie with the Beatles, all four of whom, especially a zealous George Harrison, were intrigued enough to journey to Rishikesh, India, to listen to what he had to say.

With the Beatles
by Lewis Lapham
Melville House, 168 pp., $12.95

This, as it turned out, was not much, and Lapham, who went on to become editor of *Harper's*, a post from which he has only recently descended, can be very funny when he sifts through the Maharishi's peculiarities, and those of his followers; *With the Beatles*, however, is a definite misnomer. On the other hand, you can sense the author's desperation: At $12.95 a pop for 168 pages, who would buy a book called *With the Maharishi Mahesh Yogi*?

Besides, the contents are packed with pleasantly arid observations: Maharishi devotees feasting on badly boiled vegetables; elderly Englishwomen who embrace homespun cloth and tired observations concerning Christ's disciples, "who were, you know, simple men"; Mia Farrow dashing in and out of the Maharishi's orbit; her sister Prudence, who stays, resolutely but mysteriously unhappy, refusing to be cheered up by John Lennon or his songs.

The author pins his wit when least expected to the tail of long, sober paragraphs, and this is an effective stunt: much as a vulture, after completing a series of lazy aerial maneuvers, might suddenly swoop earthward and pounce on a lamb.

Judy Bachrach, a contributing editor at Vanity Fair, *is the author of* Tina and Harry Come to America.

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For example, Lapham points out, the Maharishi liked to poll his followers on how many hours they devoted daily to meditation. Since, in addition to being extremely holy, the guy was also a big star . . . um . . . gazer, he pursued this issue publicly with Prudence Farrow, who gamely replied, "Twelve hours, Maharishi." (Small wonder she was ill-humored.) The leader's response to such devotion clearly delights Lapham, who reports:

> The answer was barely audible but it so pleased the Maharishi that he pressed his hands together in praise of the Guru Dev, and then, turning toward a small altar decorated with ferns and palm fronds, he performed a ceremony involving the burning of sandalwood, the chanting of a Vedic scripture and the ringing of tiny bells. The ritual inspired a good many of the older students in the hall to prostrate themselves at full length upon the cow dung.

The second-best response to the Maharishi's spiritual demands comes from Mike Love of the Beach Boys, who acknowledges that sexual images sometimes intrude on his meditations, and that "the only thing that keeps me going is the thought of a Max's sandwich at the Stage."

Of course, what the Maharishi really wants out of all this is a lot less mysterious than the restorative powers of the winding Ganges, or the infinite forms of transportation preferred by Hindu deities. "The Maharishi had great hopes for the Beatles; they would become his apostles to a discordant and deluded world," a follower confides. Even more to the point, if the fine karma held out, "they might be persuaded to endow the Spiritual Regeneration Movement with an annual percentage of the income from their record sales."

And what of the Beatles, you ask? Are they as complaisant about their purse strings, or as zealous in their spiritual pursuits, as seems to be expected? As it happens, I asked myself the very same thing, and was bummed out to discover that I had to complete 98 percent of the book—deities, dirt, sacred monkeys, elephants, aphorisms, more vegetables—before encountering them, wearing lots of orange flowers and saying practically nothing.

I realize that Lapham had to do much the same: Weeks passed before the Fab Four threw him a ragged old quote, and then, basically, only Ringo piped up. But to what avail? "I didn't press him for the kind of information that could be changed into news, and I didn't take notes," writes the author. Come again? He is clearly congratulating himself for what in ordinary journalistic circumstances would be a firing offense.

And not only that: I suspect I am not all that different from most people when I acknowledge I'm not all *that* interested, these many decades later, in the Maharishi or his (evidently active) sex life. The man was a charlatan, silly and dull, an easy target, and Lapham is not the only one to discover he was fond of the ladies. On the other hand, I am sort of intrigued by the Beatles and the news that Ringo "wore bell-bottomed trousers gaudily flecked [*sic*] with black and red stripes" doesn't exactly fall into the *aperçu* category.

Worse, Lapham reports that he was touched by Ringo's "uncontrived compassion," as well as by "his concern for his children," but since the guy took two weeks off to go to India and gaze at the Ganges, it makes you wonder. Not about Ringo; about Lapham and his fawning insights. Maybe the Maharishi wasn't the only star gazer? ♦

Booked Up

Nicholas Basbanes and the world of bibliomania.

BY MICHAEL DIRDA

Readers, unlike scholars, tend to be flighty creatures, unsystematic, desultory, downright fickle. They dart from one enthusiasm to the next, sometimes with wild abandon. Taste hardly enters into it. A man who reveres Robert Frost may spend an evening, and a very happy one, with H.P. Lovecraft's "Call of Cthulhu"; a woman who regards *Middlemarch* as the supreme Victorian novel can also devour Dick Francis mysteries or Diana Gabaldon romances. Great scholars need to be focused and ordered to get their work done; great readers, by contrast, believe only in whim, serendipity, the passing mood.

Every Book Its Reader
The Power of the Printed Word to Stir the World
by Nicholas Basbanes
HarperCollins, 384 pp., $29.95

Michael Dirda, columnist for the Washington Post Book World, *is the author of two essay collections, a memoir, and the forthcoming* Book by Book: Notes on Reading and Life.

Bookman Nicholas Basbanes lies somewhere between these two poles. In the past dozen years or so he's published four hefty volumes—hundreds and hundreds of pages—about libraries, collectors, and literary scholarship. In particular, he's chronicled, or rather celebrated, every sort of print-maddened obsessive. Largely made up of profiles, Basbanes's work reflects the brisk thoroughness of a conscientious reporter, as well as the enthusiasm—the "gentle madness" he has called it—of a fellow bibliophile. Flitting from subject to subject, his books are consequently somewhat scrappy in character and not always as deep as one might hope; they are, in other words, good journalism.

For most readers, this makes Basbanes's reportage (in *A Splendor of Letters*, *Patience and Fortitude*, *A Gentle Madness*) all the more welcome. In his

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pages, literary theory and arcane scholarship are presented as anecdote-driven, human-interest stories.

For example, in *Every Book Its Reader*, we overhear the feisty, no-nonsense Matthew J. Bruccoli talk about his passion for the physical book. Anyone who's studied American literature probably knows that Bruccoli has spearheaded modern research into the texts of F. Scott Fitzgerald, and done important work on Ernest Hemingway, Dashiell Hammett, Thomas Wolfe, John O'Hara, and a good many other eminences of 20th-century American letters. This University of South Carolina professor has steadily edited manuscripts, written biographies, and trained textual scholars. But above all, he has spent his life as an unreconstructed bookman, tracking down every scrap from the pen of Fitzgerald that he can find, and as much by the novelist's friends and followers as he can afford.

He is quite indefatigable. Once, Basbanes tells us, Bruccoli hoped to acquire the young Fitzgerald's contributions to *The St. Paul Academy Now and Then*:

> "There are two sets of these in the world," Bruccoli said. "St. Paul Academy has one, this is the other." How Bruccoli managed to find his set is a story unto itself. "I got hold of a Minneapolis phone book and a St. Paul phone book, and I wrote to every name that had a Fitzgerald connection, and I wrote and I wrote and I wrote, and finally, somebody said, 'Yes, I've got one.'" A similar strategy helped him locate his copies of the college theatrical productions written by Fitzgerald, including Fie! Fie! Fi-Fi! "I wrote to every surviving member of the classes of 1917, 1916, 1915, and 1914."

Bruccoli's fabulously valuable library is meant for use, not ostentation. During his interview he shows how even authorial inscriptions can be revelatory: Whenever Fitzgerald inscribed a copy of *Tender is the Night*, he obsessed about its relative failure in the marketplace. It was obviously something that hurt him greatly. And we know this because Bruccoli has been able to read the very writing on the endpapers. There is, in short, no substitute for the actual book itself.

The simile-mad stylist William Gass tells Basbanes that everything he publishes, whether fiction, philosophy, or essay, grows out of his 12,000-volume personal library. Harold Bloom reminds us that he still spends time every day with Shakespeare—and that his once insane reading speed has begun to slow down. Daniel Aaron, one of the founders of American Studies as a discipline, admits that the most important work he owns is his own commonplace book, the now multi-volume record of favorite passages from a lifetime of reading.

In other chapters, translators like Edith Grossman (Cervantes), Robert Fagles (Homer and Virgil), and Breon Mitchell (Kafka) reflect on their art. Mitchell underscores the need for each generation to retranslate great works by confessing that, given the chance, he could easily produce a second, and very different, version of *The Trial*. Helen Vendler remembers how she used to memorize Gerard Manley Hopkins, William Wordsworth, and Dylan Thomas while riding the streetcar as a schoolgirl. Despite her own influence as a critic, she also points out that "in the final analysis, it is not critics who create literary canons, it is other writers who create them . . . you have to be doing something that your peers admire."

As for what a literary scholar does, Christopher Ricks explains: "I take it that the close reader's job is to help people notice things they otherwise wouldn't have noticed, and not only noticing things, but noticing relations *between* things that they have noticed."

As should be evident, Basbanes might have titled this assemblage of pieces about the "power of the printed word" *Scholars at Work*, recalling the famous "Writers at Work" feature of *The Paris Review*. There are interesting factoids on every page. Hitler's favorite book was Thomas Carlyle's biography of Frederick the Great (with whom the Führer obviously identified). Queen Elizabeth I set aside three hours a day for reading and knew half-a-dozen languages and translated Boethius' *Consolation of Philosophy*. Isaac Newton would dog-ear the corner of a page so that it pointed directly to the passage that interested him. John Quincy Adams was probably the best read of all our presidents. The wide-ranging Robert Coles decided to become a doctor because his hero, the poet William Carlos Williams, worked as a pediatrician. When Coleridge scholar Heather Jackson took up the study of the marginalia scribbled in books, she initiated a new way to understand how readers interact with what they read. And after the deaths of her child and husband, Elaine Pagels found some solace by plunging more deeply into her studies of the apocryphal Gospel of Thomas.

Then again, perhaps another title for this book might be, slightly modifying Kierkegaard, *Pages on Life's Way*.

There are occasional errors: Goethe's poems may be transcendent, but they weren't set to music by Bach; "The Past Recaptured" is the last section of Proust's great novel, not an alternative English version of its title. But everyone makes mistakes, and it's hard to fault a man of such obvious goodwill and so much hard work. Appropriately, Basbanes quotes the passage from Virginia Woolf that describes and honors "the common reader" who, says Woolf,

> reads for his own pleasure rather than to impart knowledge or correct the opinions of others. Above all, he is guided by an instinct to create for himself, out of whatever odds and ends he can come by, some kind of whole—a portrait of a man, a sketch of an age, a theory of the art of writing. He never ceases, as he reads, to run up some rickety and ramshackle fabric which shall give him the temporary satisfaction of looking sufficiently like the real object to allow of affection, laughter and argument.

Surely, these last—"affection, laughter and argument"—aptly characterize the work of this great contemporary celebrant of the common, and the uncommon, reader, Nicholas Basbanes. ♦

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9/11 on Film

The horror, and heroism, of one day in history.

BY JOHN PODHORETZ

On September 18, 2001, ABC News president David Westin decided that his network would no longer air footage of the attacks on the World Trade Center only a week before. The constant repetition of the images of the planes crashing into the buildings had become "gratuitous," a spokesman said.

Almost immediately, all other networks and news channels adopted the same policy, and ever since, it is only on rare occasions that Americans have been exposed to those indelible images. This extraordinary act of journalistic collusion followed another mysteriously unanimous decision to censor the photographs and moving images of those victims who had chosen to jump to their deaths rather than be burned alive.

United 93
Directed by Paul Greengrass

At the time, these choices seemed tasteful and appropriate. The perpetual repetition of the pictures and footage over the course of that first week threatened to make them as familiar as bland wallpaper, or serve as the permanent backdrop for cable-news channel self-promotion. And yet the policy has remained in place to this day, long after there was any risk of the footage's misuse.

Indeed, the purpose behind censoring the 9/11 images seems to be somewhat different from the one in the immediate aftermath of the attacks. One gets the impression that the video footage is kept largely under wraps because of the emotions it might provoke. Someone is trying to protect us from the neurochemical cocktail of grief and rage, sorrow and anger, trauma and vengefulness that even a few minutes' conversation about 9/11 can cause.

Or, perhaps, some in the media might feel as though the imagery is almost too politicized. Perhaps because George W. Bush invokes the attacks and their meaning so frequently, leading figures in the media believe the imagery will tend to buttress Bush's arguments, and serve as unpaid advertising for the president's policies.

Thus, while the events of 9/11 remain the most important and devastating in recent American history, they have achieved a peculiar invisibility. In New York, where I live, there are ferocious arguments about the way the rebuilding at Ground Zero has been mishandled—about the designs of the buildings and the street grid and the look, placement, and size of the memorials. Somehow, these discussions have become weirdly divorced from the reason that Ground Zero even exists.

And what of the country? In an April CBS News poll, only 6 percent of respondents said terrorism was the most important problem facing the United States. Even if that shockingly small number is misleading—because in the same poll, 27 percent of respondents said Iraq was the most important problem, and many of them surely believe the war in Iraq is part of the war on terror—it still indicates that the events of 9/11 have receded. Yes, everyone knows about and remembers the hijacking of four planes and the murders of nearly 3,000 civilians in an unprovoked and unprecedented attack. But those deaths may have lost some of their sting.

The masterful new film *United 93*, the first major Hollywood release about September 11, is reticent as well when it comes to the depictions of the attacks in New York. American Airlines Flight 11 is shown only as a computerized glyph on an air-traffic controller's screen. The controller knows the plane has been hijacked and is tracking it as it enters the airspace over New York. Suddenly, the glyph just vanishes from his screen.

"It's gone," the controller says. "It was there and then it's just gone." Flight 11 has just crashed into the North Tower.

Sixteen minutes elapse on screen between that moment and the one in which writer-director Paul Greengrass shows us the fate of United Airlines Flight 175, following precisely the span of time on the real September 11. Greengrass brings us into the control tower at Newark Airport, which has a direct view of South Manhattan ten miles to the East. The people working there are asked if they can see Flight 175 just as, in the distance, the jet sails without hesitation into the South Tower. The men in the control room react without reacting, expressionless, unable to process what they've just witnessed.

Greengrass's handling of these historic horrors is pitch-perfect, in part because we are so unused to seeing them close-up. By starting first with the little glyph and then moving on to the plane in the distance, he brings us back to that morning as most of us experienced it: a shocked phone call, a report on a car radio, worried whispers of a terrorist strike, a hurried move to a television, then the unimaginable news of a second plane hitting the second building, followed a few minutes later by a clear-as-day image of that seminal event.

Greengrass is presenting the events of that morning in documentary fashion, a cinematic version of what journalists call a "tick-tock"—a minute-by-

John Podhoretz, a columnist for the New York Post, *is* THE WEEKLY STANDARD*'s movie critic and author of the forthcoming* Can She Be Stopped?

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minute re-creation in narrative form. Everything we see is staged, written by Greengrass and performed by actors. But among the actors are Ben Sliney, who was running the Federal Aviation Administration's operations room in Herndon, Va., on the morning of September 11, and Major James Fox, who was in charge of the Northeast Air Defense Sector at Otis Air Force Base on Cape Cod.

As the movie jumps from Boston Air Traffic Control to the FAA to Newark Airport to Herndon to Otis, Greengrass achieves a staggering level of verisimilitude. The atmosphere is thick with confusion. Nobody has the same information at the same time, planes are routinely confused and misidentified, and key personnel are on vacation.

For the central story Greengrass is trying to tell, the reticence and confusion are both essential. For *United 93* is about the plane that was brought down in a Pennsylvania field because the 33 passengers on board figured out that they were being taken on a suicide mission and chose to take matters into their own hands. The scenes on board United 93 are, of course, mostly speculative. All we know about the flight comes from the phone calls made by passengers and some bits of discussion in the cockpit that were either transmitted to an air-traffic control center in Cleveland or were recorded by the plane's black box.

We see the passengers, pilots, and flight crew board the plane, eat breakfast, make chit-chat. The plane is delayed on the ground for 47 minutes before takeoff, and we watch as lead hijacker Ziad Jarrah sits alone in seat 1A in first class while his compatriots sit behind him, waiting for him to act. It is Greengrass's speculation that a panicky Jarrah froze, which delayed the hijacking long enough for the passengers to discover from cellphone and AirFone calls that the Twin Towers had been hit and that there were other hijacked planes in the sky.

Because the flight was delayed, and the hijacking itself did not take place for another half-hour, Greengrass manages the near-impossible. He makes us hope.

Universal Studios / Jonathan Olley

'The first people to live in the post-9/11 world.'

He makes us think that, perhaps, the hijacking we know happened will not, that the panicky Jarrah and his evil crew will fail, that the attempt to take over the plane and land it safely might succeed.

And because Greengrass chose circumspection in his portrayal of the Twin Tower attacks, the sudden and shocking violence of the hijacking of United 93 hits us hard. Four people were killed in the takeover of the plane, which would have seemed like small potatoes next to the devastation in New York. But because of Greengrass's brilliance, the horror of those murders is given its full weight.

In the film's final 32 minutes, the passengers and crew become, as Greengrass has said, "the first people to live in the post-9/11 world." They gather information quickly, including word that a third plane has struck the Pentagon. The men who choose to storm the cockpit don't give speeches about their intentions. They simply decide they must do something, and they know there is a pilot among the passengers who might be able to land the plane. They don't intend to die. They intend to win.

And in world-historical terms, they do win. When Jarrah sits down in the pilot's seat, he tapes a photo of the Capitol to his controls. We don't know where, exactly, United 93 was headed, but it was surely either the Capitol or the White House. By doing what they did, Greengrass reminds us, the passengers saved America from political decapitation.

Because the movie reminds us of this, and because it does not seek to wring tears but wants us to have some sense of what might have happened on that plane as it was happening in real time, Greengrass has succeeded in making a movie about September 11 that is both appropriately heartbreaking and quietly triumphant. *United 93* is a masterpiece of a kind; but it's hard to say what kind of masterpiece it is, because there's never been a movie like it before, and there may never be one to compare to it again.

There's a lot of talk about whether Americans are "ready" to see a movie about 9/11. Some of that talk is doubtless due to the same attitude that says Americans can't possibly stomach seeing footage of the crashes, or the buildings falling. Such infantilization is an insult both to Americans, who are perfectly capable of handling such things, and to the memories of those who perished in the attacks, whose public murders are being treated as though they had been quiet and private deaths.

There's no reason to fear *United 93*. It is a riveting examination of an unbearable moment. Not only can we take it, we can also rise to the challenge it presents—both to us, and to those who would treat Americans as though they were hothouse flowers incapable of feeling the "right way" about September 11. ♦

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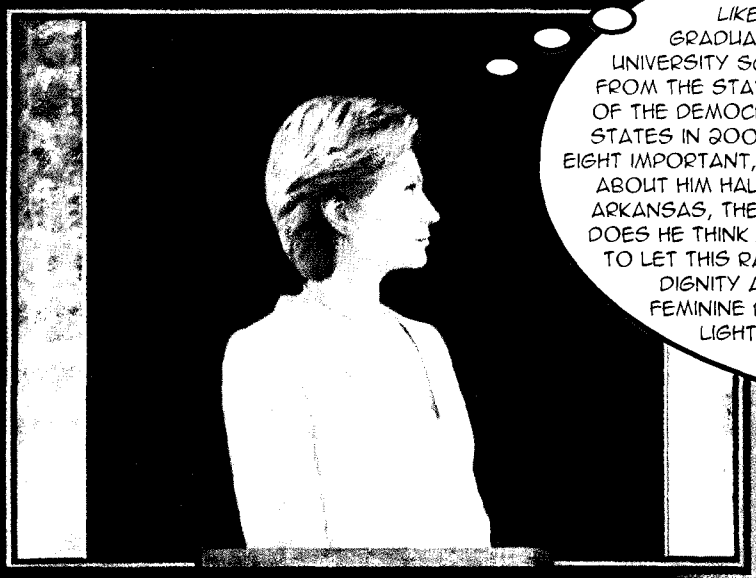
Portraits of former President Bill Clinton and First Lady Hillary Rodham Clinton, which will hang in the National Portrait Gallery, were unveiled at the Smithsonian Institution last week. —News item

Parody

What They Were Thinking



SO MINE IS HALF THE SIZE OF HIS, IS IT? I DON'T MIND SAYING, *I DON'T LIKE THIS ONE DAMN BIT.* I'M AN HONORS GRADUATE OF WELLESLEY COLLEGE AND THE YALE UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF LAW. I'M A UNITED STATES SENATOR FROM THE STATE OF NEW YORK. I'M THE PRESUMPTIVE NOMINEE OF THE DEMOCRATIC PARTY FOR THE PRESIDENCY OF THE UNITED STATES IN 2008. I WAS FIRST LADY OF THE UNITED STATES FOR EIGHT IMPORTANT, EPOCHAL, HISTORY-MAKING YEARS. YEAH, I'M NUTS ABOUT HIM HALF THE TIME, BUT HE WAS—WHAT?—GOVERNOR OF ARKANSAS, THE *RAZORBACK* STATE, FOR GOD'S SAKE, AND WHO DOES HE THINK *MADE* HIM PRESIDENT, ANYWAY? I AM NOT GOING TO LET THIS RATTLE ME. NO, NO. STEADY. I SHALL STAND WITH DIGNITY AND FORBEARANCE. I WILL LOOK FORWARD, FEMININE BUT STRONG, WITH THAT INNER BEAUTY THAT LIGHTS UP THE EXTERIOR, WISE, COURTEOUS, IMMENSELY CAPABLE . . .

MAN, I CAN JUST IMAGINE WHAT SHE'S THINKIN' RIGHT NOW. OL' HILLARY RODHAM. NOW, LOOK HERE: SHE'S GIVIN' ME THAT THIS-HURTS-ME-MORE-THAN-IT-HURTS-YOU LOOK I'VE SEEN A COUPLE TIMES OVER THE YEARS! BUT I'LL TELL YA THIS: IT'S A WHOLE LOT DIFFERENT FROM THE LOOK SHE GAVE ME THAT DAY IN THE YALE LIBRARY WHEN SHE CAME OVER TO MY TABLE WITH HER ARMLOAD OF BOOKS AND BIG COKE-BOTTLE GLASSES AND I COULD SEE SHE SURE AS HECK DIDN'T WANT TO TALK ABOUT CONTRACTS. NO, SIR! BUT HEY, I'M USED TO IT. WHAT'S THAT MARLENE DIETRICH SONG DAVID HAWK WAS ALWAYS SINGING: "*I CAN'T HELP MYSELF?*" OR SOMETHIN'. YOU KNOW, I'D SEE THESE BABES COMING THROUGH THE WHITE HOUSE, MAYBE IN FOR A BRIEFING OR SOMETHIN', AND I'D BE STANDING THERE IN FRONT OF THE FIREPLACE IN THE OVAL OFFICE, WITH MY HAND ON MY HIP LIKE THIS, AND THEY'D DAMN NEAR . . .

the weekly Standard

MAY 8, 2006

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The Shadow of the Bomb, 2006

Keeping nukes away from bad actors

[W]e have to ask: Is it possible for the United States and its friends to agree on criteria for diplomatic initiatives to head off other crises like the one we now face in North Korea and the one looming with Iran? And if the diplomatic initiatives fail in North Korea and Iran, and perhaps elsewhere in the future, will we be able to agree on criteria appropriate for imposing sanctions and, perhaps, eventually for initiating forceful actions against those who insist on moving ahead toward acquiring nuclear capabilities and are behaving aggressively? The experience at the United Nations leading up to the invasion of Iraq shows how difficult that challenge will be. A serious effort to come to such agreements will have to start by restoring and strengthening the international consensus against nuclear proliferation, and defining clear responsibilities and authority for action by the UN Security Council.

—Sidney D. Drell

Are Doctors Biased?

The factors underlying disparities in treatment

Ultimately, improvement in the quality of care and self-care would elevate the status of minority health appreciably. But the greater public-health good would be served by applying these goals to all underserved people rather than focusing on minorities. By focusing on those with the worst health, the targets of intervention will still turn out to be poor minority groups, but they will include lower-class whites as well. For example, establishing screening (for cancer, diabetes, or hypertension) or wellness-education programs in benighted areas such as southeast Washington, D.C., or the Watts neighborhood of Los Angeles would benefit all residents and shrink overall racial differentials in health outcome because they would disproportionately target minorities.

—Sally Satel and Jonathan Klick

Paid for by the Hoover Institution, Stanford University.

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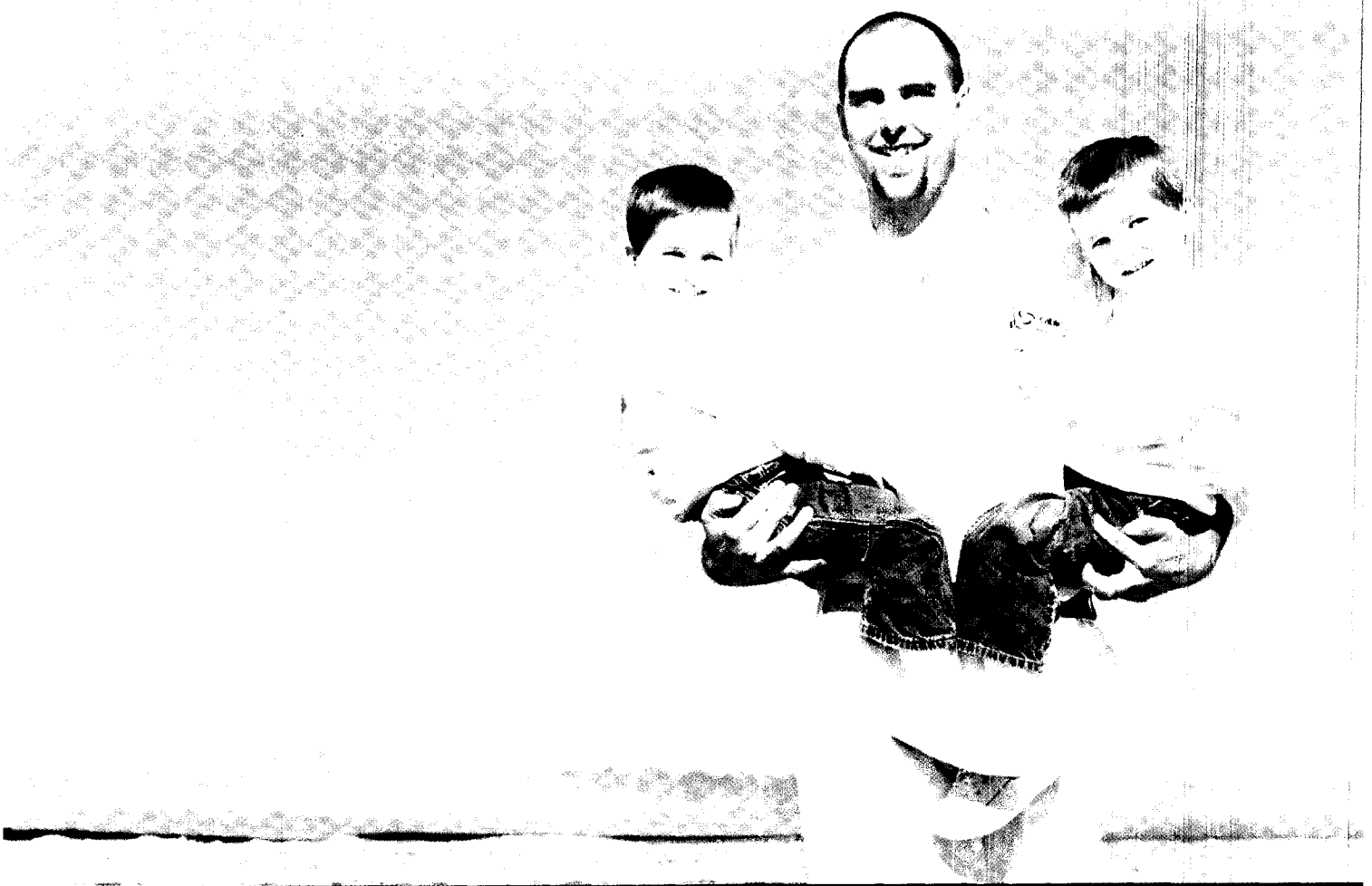

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